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MEN WHO SELL THINGS

WALTER D. MOODY

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1919-8-9.

Men
Who Sell Things

Men Who Sell Things

OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF OVER TWENTY YEARS AS TRAVELLING SALESMAN, EUROPEAN BUYER, SALES MANAGER, EMPLOYER

By

WALTER D. MOODY

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AUTHOR:

"Chicago's Greatest Issue—An Official Plan"
"Wacker's Manual of the Plan of Chicago"

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Dedicated to

The Commercial Ambassador

"The Man Who Sells Things"

401142

Foreword

THIS book is an attempt to specify the qualifications necessary to the making of a successful salesman and the reasons for so many failures in the greatest profession on earth, the profession of salesmanship.

I wish to write, not of the doctrine of "luck," "chance," and "good fortune," but of the doctrine of effort and result; to proclaim that highest form of twentieth-century salesmanship which brings success, not to the indolent, the improvident, and the dreamer, but to the striving, the intelligent, and the busy man.

When a man has taken the "third degree" in the science of salesmanship, has put finishing touches on a career of strapping and unstrapping cases in hot Summers and chilly Winters, has taken a course in hard knocks at the College of Give-and-Take; after he has been *frappéed* by below-zero receptions; after he has simmered in the caldron of competition; after he has set his foot on the path that leads to the summit of the mountain peak Success; after he has taken his post-graduate training in seeing Hope deferred,— I believe he should have the degree of Commercial Ambassador brought to him

on a golden salver, for he is now a professor in the gentle arts of Peace and Plenty.

If you will recall the definition of Ambassador as set down in the dictionaries, it signifies an envoy of the highest rank sent by one government to another for the advantage of both. If there is anybody in the world who knows more about diplomacy than the men who sell things, knows more of dexterity, skill, and tact, more of the art of conducting negotiations, I will cheerfully waive the title of Ambassador and return to those of Travelling Man and Drummer.

But, even then, is not every salesman worthy the name, an envoy of the highest rank sent by one house to another?

Herald, then, the Commercial Ambassador! He is the herald and harbinger of the good things in the world — all of them. When he stops bumping the ties hotels will hang out "To Let" signs, railroads will have salt-watered stock, and storekeepers everywhere will raise cobwebs in their shop-windows. He keeps going — and he keeps all the rest going. He is the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

What, then, of the man who sends back the Ambassador's card by an office-boy, who turns his back upon him, who curtly refuses him a look-in? Such a man fails absolutely to safeguard the interests

of his customers, proves him ignorant of his own welfare, and into the bargain cheats himself out of the rich storehouse of knowledge that can be entered only through the magic key intrusted to the Commercial Ambassador — that daily reviewer of the results of human endeavor of every sort, from desperate failure to brilliant success. *Hoch der* Ambassador! It is to him and for him that I have written this book.

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Men Who Sell Things

CHAPTER I

THE NEW ERA

The salesman regularly supplies the electric spark which keeps the commercial engine going.

ALL the markets of the world are built on salesmanship. The world of commerce goes on salesmanship; now fast, now slow; plodding here, bounding there — but whatever its pace, whatever its attainment, it is going on salesmanship.

Every salesman is a market builder, and every market builder is a world mover.

The commercial institutions of the earth are the monuments to the genius of salesmanship that all men know.

The salesmanship that builds these monuments is the high expression of tireless efforts, *the acquired skill*, and the intellectual strength of the men who sell things — the salesmen.

The commonplace salesman who is content with a mediocre degree of success, who lacks either desire or power to labor for the best that his profession contains, is little worthy of the name "salesman."

Work of the type most needed in the field of salesmanship is the successful carrying out of that which reflects the most credit upon the profession.

Little that is worth having is secured in this world except by unceasing toil. *The salesman must be glad to do a salesman's work.*

"Few battles are ever finally won. There are always positions to be held and new ones to be conquered."

The enormous pressure of new business and the constant tightening of competition seem to crush out the hope and energy of a large proportion of salesmen. The great problem of modern business progress to the salesman is how to deal with this tendency,— how to prevent being crushed out and shoved to one side in the mad commercial whirl for conquest.

The well-rounded salesman who has husbanded his strength for the onrush will find methods to preserve his talent and energy from decay. The preservation will come, not through boasting or through the acquisition of new territory and accounts, nor through the magnification of past achievements, but through the natural law of infinite patience, constant study of new conditions, clearer adaptation of means to ends, infinite devotion to instant duty, and absolute fidelity to his house as it is and yet may be.

There can be no more accepted time than the present as the arena of this action. The success of the efficient salesman will be greater in proportion

to the number of those who are yet unaware of the changing times and the growing feeling that professional salesmanship must supersede the old school of unorganized ways and methods.

The crowding of the field of salesmanship, and the exhaustion of old-time resources in the art of selling goods, have forced a revolution in this special branch of industry. The pressure of business intensified, manufacturers and merchants who employ large forces of travelling salesmen are looking for a new degree of greatness in salesmanship based on scientific methods.

More zealous care is needed that no talent may be neglected, that employers may not constantly be obliged to seek outside forces with which to replenish their depleted sales ranks.

The successful salesman will not lose his character. His proud claim of leadership on the sales force of his house will not pass into the hands of others if he recognizes the fact that his first duty to himself, and his highest duty to his house, is to have his ship constantly cleared for the action of the present strenuous day, and to be prepared for the coming era of unparalleled commercial activity.

To the twentieth-century salesman it is of the utmost moment to look at coming conditions and make sure the defence of his selling methods against the creeping foe lurking behind commonplace ways,

— the foe that only newer, better, and quicker methods can halt in his conquest of the indolent, the over-anxious, the old-timer and all other types of negative salesmen that go to make up the vast crowd of the improvident and unwise.

A salesman of experience realizes that *ideas* — practical methods of selling goods — are of the greatest value, and he also knows that it pays him to search for them. It takes brains to influence brains. Some one has said: "For every ten dollars that a high-salaried man draws, he gets nine dollars for what he knows and one dollar for what he does."

The same old way of doing things cannot be successfully employed month after month and year after year. The salesman must be modern — *up to date* — as much as the men of other professions. The physician or lawyer finds that to compete successfully he is compelled to read, read, read, all the time, in order that he may learn of advancement in treatments or procedures.

"To the man who fails belong the excuses." The more good ideas, the better the basis for good work. The best of salesmen fail at times to sell to certain buyers, without being able to give a reason for falling down. The methods employed successfully for many years seem to count for nothing. In such cases, no doubt, a very little thing, a mere

oversight, perchance, has caused the trouble. To locate the "nigger in the wood-stack" in one's methods means much. The only hope lies in putting the plumb-line of the experience of others beside one's own.

Every new idea aids in the salesman's ultimate triumph — adds a sound piece of timber to the structure of his final success.

Failure does not come through making mistakes, but in refusing to learn by mistakes how to avoid them.

Experience is a good teacher, but it is a great thing to be able to learn from the experience of others, for we cannot all have the same experiences or the same view of similar experiences. There are many pathways to success, but the road of the individual's experience is narrow and rugged.

The old-time "minstrel" travelling man is a thing of the past, and with him have gone the days of getting business by means of circus tricks, chicanery, and sleight-of-hand performances in tact. True knowledge properly applied is the power behind the throne winning the big business of to-day.

That vast army of business-getters known as travelling salesmen have attained a dignity fitted to promote the interests of their houses in the field, realizing that scientific methods have placed their vocation in the list of *professions*.

The real purpose, character, calibre, and life of the commercial traveller have too long been depreciated by the general public. He may be suffering in this respect for the sins of his forefathers on the road; but things have changed. No one has a right to look upon any phase or sphere of American manhood as subject-matter for a joke-book, and the travelling salesman is becoming very tired, and justly so, of being regarded as a five-ring circus, or a wild beast going about seeking whom he may devour.

True, the law of "the survival of the fittest" has caused business on the road to become a contest of wits; but it is also true that the travelling salesman has elevated himself and his work by force of character and dint of his own energies.

Many writers on matters pertaining to salesmanship have not yet discovered the real character and work of road salesmen. We are looking to a higher and better sphere of usefulness in the business and social world than much of the stuff written to portray real road life would indicate.

"John Henry," "It's Up to You," and other modern compilations are side issues compared to the vernacular of the road as served up by some writers in object-lesson style to attract the attention of salesmen as a guise for a course in salesmanship.

The salesman who regards his work from a

serious, high-grade standpoint is constantly seeking instruction of a meritorious nature — new ways and methods. He does not want stories of road life veneered in the coarsest slang, all tending to assign to him a serio-comic role.

What the world of salesmanship wants is educated enthusiasm. The purest of king's English will secure an audience and hold attention for the salesman anywhere, while slang and short cuts of speech often excite distrust and offend the ear of the truly refined. The field is ripe for educated salesmen,— the sort that refuse to give their customers credit for knowing more about their business than they know themselves,— salesmen who can go out and put up a selling-talk that is earnest, logical, and clean-cut from the time they strike one town until the train carries them to the next with their pockets full of orders.

The question of handling a customer in making a sale is naturally a local issue to some extent, as merchants in widely separated localities conduct their business according to the usages of their particular sections.

It is also true that dealers in small towns require different tactics from the large city merchant; but no matter what the conditions may be, the old saying, "Business is business," holds true pretty much the world over.

With the arrival of interurban electric cars and rural free deliveries and telephones and many other improvements in rural districts, a pace of progression has set in, even in the most out-of-the-way village, that is rapidly changing the ideas and methods of the country merchant. With the farmer buying automobiles, and the prosperous small-town business man sending his sons off to college, it is high time for the travelling salesman to begin to realize that a new era is dawning for him also.

It is no longer necessary in making a town to begin the day before by planning some new and wonderful strategy that will insure the selling of a bill to this or that customer; no need of a "Samantha Allen" visit, with a dance at the village hall in the evening with your favorite customer's friends and family.

Tact? Why, yes, that is necessary, of course. You can no more interest the man whose store has just been robbed, or whose head salesman has just left to take a position with his worst competitor, now than you could twenty years ago. But you can approach the merchant the country over, small town or large, under ordinary circumstances, and gain and hold his attention with the right kind of selling-talk, all on business and delivered straight from the shoulder. Even the "before-breakfast grouch" will listen to you if there is a resolute

ring in your voice and a good-natured sparkle in your eye.

One of the most successful business men of my acquaintance started life with a shoestring, and worked his way up from stock-boy to salesman, from salesman to buyer, from buyer to the head of the greatest house in the world in his line, besides holding large outside responsibilities.

The most prominent feature of his character was his remarkable earnestness of purpose. There was not a salesman in the long list of those in his employ who could begin to approach him in selling-talk, and he had some of the best men in the business. As buyer, before he became an employer, it is said of him that he could take prospective customers into his office for fifteen minutes, from among the largest and hardest merchants to sell to in the country, and turn them out with an immediate and enthusiastic desire to go through the great establishment and select goods.

He had no time to bandy idle words, and rarely indulged in useless sentences or light remarks. He believed buyers came into his store bent on business; and he despatched them with courtesy, backed up by arguments, every word of which put new ideas into his customers' minds and helped to swell the accounts on the right side of his ledgers.

Basing my calculations on actual experience

with a large number of salesmen of all classes, sorts, and conditions, I assert without any hesitation that the really big men, those who have made the profession worth while, are the ones who have employed the highest degree of science in their work,— not an acquired science, perhaps, but a natural, established, and classified knowledge of men and things relating to the daily routine of their work:

"*Brain stuff and soul stuff.*"

I am not the one to gainsay that an acquired science of professional salesmanship will be generally recognized by employers of large numbers of salesmen within the next five or ten years, in fact, an exact science of successful salesmanship has already been formulated, and is being taught with success; it fits the needs of our profession, just as the science of law or of *materia medica* fits the requirements of those respective professions, and is receiving widespread attention on the part of thinking salesmen and employers of salesmen.

Failures may be due to lack of natural ability, or adaptability, *but they are more often due to lack of intelligent application.*

There are many industrious salesmen who have always applied their energies in commonplace ways, — for instance, with territories that could easily be made to yield much larger returns from their labor,— who have little idea of the great values that may be

produced on a given territory subject to high culture in salesmanship.

There is a natural tendency, when big sales are made by the really successful men, to suppose that they are peculiar to some distant or especially favored location, that the golden harvest, the good things, are away off somewhere else, in the other fellow's territory. Those failing to see advantages at home, who are disposed to seek the gold at the rainbow's end, may well ponder the story of the old Persian who sold his little hillside farm, wandered far over land and sea in a vain search for diamonds, and finally died a pauper in a strange land; while the stranger watering his flock at the stream on the little farm found a peculiar pebble glittering in the brook, which proved to be the first of a wealth of gems such as the old man had gone to seek.

All salesmen start with an equal chance, but many are soon distanced in the race. They are content with a steady, plodding, uniform way of doing things, and while they are methodical and obtain good results, those who win figure out some way of getting better results and getting them more easily. They take chances on doing things in other than the prescribed way, often finding the new way the better. Few have the energy to break out and get away into the wide fields of effort worth while.

We get into a certain circular routine, and we go

around and around, week in and week out, year in and year out, not realizing that *life's really important work is the doing of something new.*

The opportunities of the present are vastly superior to the opportunities of the last two or three decades. The needs of our great commercial machine multiply with its growth; and he is the fortunate salesman who has learned the immense value of *educated enthusiasm,* for to him is open the pathway to high-salaried positions that appear as dreams of Aladdin's Cave to his less ambitious brother.

True, the mountain seems high, but he who finds the right road will surely get to the top. Every mountain seems insurmountable at first, but little by little the distance is laid behind, and at last, half wondering whether it is a mountain after all, we find ourselves at the top. But to find the easy ascent to the golden mountain of salesmanship, the salesman must first dig, dig, dig, deep in the fields of knowledge of his profession.

Successful salesmanship carries with it large salaries — often of from five to fifteen thousand dollars per annum. "Oh! but such salaries are not for me," wails the timorous one. Listen! The salesman who lies down at the beginning with, "Oh, I never had any luck. By the time I get there I'll find some one else already there ahead of me," would better stay out of the salesmanship business,— or

any other kind of business, for that matter. He is of little faith, a pessimist, a failure at heart to begin with, and wouldn't hold a position long with any house at a thousand dollars per year, to say nothing of five.

To the bright salesman it is not a difficult task to map out a promising line of action for his career on the road from among the failures and middleweights, and a persevering hustle will do the rest.

A shrewd, perceptive faculty, together with a convincing perseverance, is one of the main essentials to success in promoting any enterprise.

Away with easy-going, rollicking ways and debauching influences! Away with small salaries, "water-tank" towns, and "one-night stands"! Let there be more lucrative fields and broader knowledge! that is the twentieth-century salesman's slogan; and that he is manfully living up to his battle-cry, the pay-rolls of large institutions all over this broad land will attest.

CHAPTER II

PURE GRIT

He who sleeps beneath the fruit tree must be contented with windfalls. The one who climbs the ladder plucks the choicest fruit.

PURE Grit constitutes one of the most essential elements of successful salesmanship. It is the best there is in a man; it is that fine quality that whispers in our ear in moments of discouragement, "Never lie down." When exhausted and sinking in the mire of Despond, it calls cheerily from the banks of Hope along the shore: "Don't give up! I'll pull you out."

It does not fall to the lot of the average man to have more hard knocks than he can stand. If he has Pure Grit and a sound heart, there is always open to him an avenue of escape, by which he can avoid the knock-out blow that would put him down and out for good. If he does lie down, there is a lack of manliness in him.

The journey over the flinty pathway of the business life is not unlike a ride on a lumber-wagon over a roadway strewn with boulders in a mountainous country. There is a constant jolting and danger of being thrown from the seat; axles creak and groan as you rattle on over bogs and rocks; now and then a

precipitous plunge into one of Nature's ditches causes a shiver to run through the stanch vehicle from stem to stern, but all goes well until a sharp turn in the road brings you face to face with a large boulder square in your path. Before you can rein up and put on brakes, snap goes the axle. You climb out to examine the break, and with an exclamation of dismay you wonder what you are going to do next; then, looking about in your perplexity, you see a blacksmith coming toward you in the form of a good genie, Pure Grit. You failed to notice him, his little shop having been hidden from view by the turn in the road. The damage repaired, with a smile of encouragement the good genie sends you on your way rejoicing, cautioning you to drive more carefully. Everything goes all right for a time, but the journey grows tiresome and you relapse into carelessness, with a light grip on the rein; or, seeing a smooth strip ahead, you whip up at a reckless pace, unmindful of the deep gully just beyond, until suddenly snap goes something else. This time the break is in all likelihood more serious. In despair, the realization is forced upon you that you are a long way from home, darkness is coming on, there is no shelter, nor any provisions for either man or beast. With many a misgiving you set about making repairs alone; it is hard work, and the experience is new and rough. You scarcely know how or where to

begin; the task seems a hopeless one. Just as the last hope is giving way, you look up and perceive standing before you in the doorway of his little shop the good genie, Pure Grit. He is beckoning you to come in; you wonder why you had not noticed him before. Once more he comes to the rescue and repairs the break, cautioning you the meanwhile to drive more carefully. You mount the seat more confident than ever that the road can hold no more terrors, but the good genie knows the road better than you do, and, not trusting you to drive alone this time, he climbs up on the seat by your side and rides along until he is convinced that you are determined to keep a sharp outlook to the end of the journey.

Robert Collyer, in a famous lecture touching this subject, said:

"Clear grit is the power to say 'No' to what seem to be a multitude of angels, when they would counsel you away from a downright loyalty to your instant duty. . . Simply determine once for all that any torment for being a true man is to be perferred to any bliss for failing."

Mr. Collyer lived in Chicago when the population numbered about one hundred thousand. During his twenty years' residence there he became quite intimate with the life of that great city, and in the early times knew every man who had come to the front and was wielding a real power of any sort for good. He says:

"I do not remember one among them who did not begin his life as a poor man's son. They all came up, so far as I could trace them, without any good time at all excepting as boys ought to have a good time in growing strong as a steel bar on plenty of wholesome work and what we should call hard fare; fighting their way to an education through a great deal of effort, and then, when they are ready, coming out West from the East with that half-dollar in their pocket, and that little lot of things done up in a valise that you will notice every young fellow is said to start with who ends up by making his mark or making a fortune."

Perhaps the first characteristic of Pure Grit lies in the power to do a good honest day's work; and this power to do a good honest day's work lies at the root of every true life.

And yet it is just what a great number of salesmen try not to do, as if they felt that the best thing is to get the most money possible for the least work possible, and very often for the poorest work possible too; and that the best success they can attain in this world is that which comes through what we call good luck. It seems as if young men began their life in this, the twentieth century, dazzled by "get-rich-quick" opportunities that seem open before them on every hand. A few, a very few, seem to strike it "lucky," but the great majority who coquette with the chances to get along easily, which seem as plentiful as flies in summer time, generally find themselves at last either in the penitentiary or the poorhouse.

They will try this and then that, and generally fail at everything they do try, if this is all they want to do; then they wait for something to turn up, instead of turning something up for themselves. The man who sat down on a log, waiting to get warm enough to chop down a tree, froze to death.

Commercial achievement does not come to the drone, neither is it a product of luck or chance.

"*The career of every successful business man is a ladder of effort and results; and the strength of the effort is the measure of the result.*"

Luck and chance do not enter the struggle at any stage.

Your present position may not be congenial; but all that can be changed, if you but set your goal-post far out in the field of endeavor and strive with all your might to reach it.

The stock-boy that sets his mind on a general salesmanship position is bound to have his desire gratified. The general salesman that sets his mind on heading the list in sales of his house will as surely realize his ambition as the morning's sun follows the deep shadows of night.

"Where there is a will there is a way," and that way is not the way of the thoughtless, the ignorant, and the indolent, but is the way of the striving, the intelligent, and the ambitious.

How well I remember my first employer! He

was the hardest taskmaster in the world, I thought, when I got my start in life; but now I know he was one of the best. I would prefer to write about your experiences, but, not knowing them, I hope you will be interested in mine.

No experience of my lifetime has been so thoroughly and indelibly stamped upon my memory as was my first three years with the wholesale dry-goods house of S. L. & Co., of Detroit, my boyhood home town. I began at three dollars per week, with a raise of one dollar in the second year, and two the third. I had the linen and white-goods stock. The work was heavy, and the hours were long. We had it drilled into us in those days that orderliness was — if not next to godliness — next to the next step in promotion. We were taught that a good stock-keeper was a logical candidate for a house salesmanship; after which, the road.

There was no standing around in cliques discussing the latest sporting edition, no prevailing idea, as now, that working when there was nothing to do was a mere pretence for work. Idleness amounted almost to a crime then; it does now, but plenty of young men do not realize this truth.

The covers removed from the piles of goods, the dusting finished, which took about an hour, for it had to be done thoroughly, bringing down the reserve stock was next in order. The tables rearranged

we set about repairing broken covers of boxes, or we re-wrapped goods which had been in stock a long time. Everything had to be spotless and in apple-pie order; so when this result was attained we started in to dust all over again, even polishing the edges of tables and counters with a cloth. There was keen rivalry among the boys to see whose stock could be made to look the best. By the middle of the forenoon work began to get pretty scarce, but there was no getting away from it, for if one of us began to take an idle stroll in the next boy's stock, the floor manager would appear around the corner of an aisle to make his usual morning inspection. It used to bother us a great deal to know how he figured out to spot us right to a dot, which he did with unerring accuracy.

Having satisfied himself that there was really nothing more of importance to do, he would order an entire table of goods to be torn down and rearranged. We hated him for it, but it was good exercise and kept us out of mischief, the twin brother of idleness, besides teaching us the lesson of "everlastingly keeping at it," which was then, as it is now, one of the cardinal principles of success. But there is a vast difference now as to the *modus operandi.*

There were no janitors or scrub-women in those days. Twice a week each stock-boy was obliged to sprinkle and sweep the floor in his stock, and even

wash the windows and clean the woodwork. We rather balked at this; it hurt our pride a little, but beyond that no harm was done.

Things have changed; whether for better or worse must be argued elsewhere. One thing is certain, the bright, industrious stock-boys of a decade or two ago are the successful merchants and salesmen of to-day. History repeats itself, and no doubt the future will take care of itself; but a grave danger confronts the merchant in the too rapid promotion of the boys in stock, the tendency being to "nip the flower in the bud." There is plenty of good raw material, but too rapid growth and not enough care in selection. The demand for high-grade men is ever on the increase; it behooves the boys in the ranks to keep their feet on the ground,— which is the humble position the rest of us occupy,— to have something to set them down on when they become tired.

My first desire to sell goods amounted to almost a longing. It attacked me early. I had been wrestling with dry-goods boxes and feather dusters for about a year and a half, when all of a sudden the seed burst forth, unfolding the petals of a new life, the freedom and brilliancy of which fairly dazzled me, young as I was.

One day a handsome, finely attired chap, with a flow of English that sounded to me like a lesson in

rhetoric, appeared in the store. He hailed from New York with a line of linens. When he encountered the buyer in my department, there commenced at once a contest of wits that to this day I have never heard equalled.

Sheltered by a pile of friendly damask, I eagerly listened to all that was said, making mental blueprints of the whole dialogue, even jotting down some of the good points. In the selling-talk of that dapper salesman lurked the germs of a new life for me. I became inoculated with a burning desire to do something and be something; the determination to become a salesman seized me on the spot; my future was sealed; I knew it, felt it, breathed it, and was content to bask in the rays of its stimulating influence.

I was at the foot of the mountain, and the way up looked steep and strewn with boulders, but the strength of my determination made the pathway seem easy and gave me a glimpse of the glorious outlook at the top.

At last an opportunity came to make my first step. It was just a little one, so small that some would have passed it by, not realizing that it really was an opportunity. It happened that one of the house salesmen who looked after the German trade had a small customer from a side street in the house buying white goods. Having been called away to meet a more important buyer, he turned his little

customer over to me with the joking side remark, "Sell him a good bill, my boy. He 's good for it," and was gone. I was frightened half out of my wits at being left alone for the first time with a real customer. I had handled many in fancy since the great event of the New York salesman's visit. I stood for a moment helpless and undecided, but was promptly brought to by Hans, who, having noticed my backwardness, said with some spirit, "Vill you do me sometings?" The spark ignited the powder, and the way I lighted into that poor little side-street merchant was worthy of better results than the amount of his bill afterwards showed. I had my notebook to prompt me with my New York friend's ideas, and many a furtive glance I stole at it when Hans was not looking. He must have thought I was suffering with St. Vitus's dance, for the contortions of salesmanship I went through in a vain effort to make him take two pieces of bird's-eye linen in place of one would, with a little more polish and experience, have landed a contract for a suspension bridge.

Two years of waiting, and my dream became a reality when I secured a position on the road with a neighboring wholesale millinery house, and my cup of happiness was filled to overflowing at the thought of becoming a real salesman and closing the old life forever.

I was fortunate in securing a little business in my first town, and when I had finished writing and mailing the order to the house that night, I went up to my room and literally threw up my hat in giving vent to my feelings. I regarded my subsequent sales for weeks as corner-stones in the superstructure of my building toward success, and the final results of each month, whether large or small, as filling-in stones to its completion.

My salary contract for one year was at six hundred dollars. The salesman ahead of me was getting one thousand, and I said to myself I must have that much next year. It seemed a fortune, and the thought was ever with me that if I could earn one thousand dollars per year I would have reached the end of the rainbow. Having secured that, I wanted fifteen hundred, then eighteen hundred. Finally arriving at two thousand five hundred, I paused and looked back over the six preceding years in an effort to measure the future by the past. The thought occurred to me that but one-third of my life had been spent in climbing, figuring it from the usual estimate of "threescore years and ten"; and why stop there? The mountain was high, and the distance to the top yet a long way up.

That was years ago, and I expect to keep on climbing until I die. But I have not engaged to write a history of my life. In passing, I wish merely

to emphasize the words of James Allen in his most excellent little book, "As a Man Thinketh":

"Into your hands will be placed the exact results of your efforts. You will receive that which you earn — no more, no less. Whatever your present circumstances might be, you will fall, remain, or rise with your efforts, your visions, your aim.

"To desire is to obtain; to aspire is to achieve. The thoughtless, the ignorant, and the indolent, seeing only the apparent effect of things, and not the things themselves, talk of luck, of fortune, and of chance. Seeing a man grow rich, they say, 'How lucky he is!' Observing another becoming intelligent, they exclaim, 'How highly fortunate he is!'

"They do not see the trials, the failures, the struggles which these have encountered; have no knowledge of the sacrifices they have made, of the undaunted efforts they have put forth that they may overcome the apparently insurmountable, and realize the goal of their ambition. They do not know the darkness and the heartaches; only see the light and joy, and call it 'luck'; do not see the long and arduous journey, but only the pleasant goal, and call it 'good fortune'; do not understand the process, but only perceive the result, and call it 'chance.'"

Successful salesmanship is the product of intelligent, earnest effort. There is no serving two masters, Indolence and Industry. It is climb, climb, climb, all the way, exercising watchful care; but the summit of the mountain is your reward. The pleasure is not all in winning, by any means; the real exhilarating fun, or two-thirds of it, is in the climbing.

Self-deception is responsible for more than

three-fourths of the so-called "unexplained failures" in salesmanship. Many salesmen in the race for success explain their shortcomings as they do in a game of ten-pins. If they fail to win, something is wrong with the alley, or the pins are not spotted, or their arm is out of whack. The trouble is never with themselves.

You cannot afford to fool yourself. Your success depends absolutely upon the amount of skill and energy you throw into your work.

If you are always on the anxious seat about your position, the fault is with yourself, not with your house, your territory, or your line. Just as the poor workman always finds fault with his tools, so does the poor salesman complain of his surroundings.

Your light will not be hid under a bushel, your capabilities will be recognized. The good salesman will succeed with a weak line and a poor territory, and then hunt around for something better with which to fit the growth of his expanding powers; but the poor salesman is a poor salesman still. The best line in the universe cannot supply the missing link in his negative make-up.

Don't imagine you are kept down by lack of your employer's appreciation. If you do, you fool yourself, and will remain a dwarf forever.

Of all the disgruntled failures, those who deserve the least sympathy are the ones who gather in

foolish little cliques, praise each other, deceive each other, and fool themselves. It is a great thing to know yourself and acknowledge your mistakes.

Have faith in your own ability to win. Cut loose from the weakness that prompts you to say:

"I am not appreciated"; "I have had bad luck all my life"; "Others have had a better chance"; "I wish I could have the good fortune of Jones or Smith or Brown."

Remember that there may be undiscovered diamonds in your own back yard.

Determine that in your case you will not recognize failure, and that "explanation is damnation."

Success lies in your ability to discover and apply your own powers. Excuses and the admission of failure are the thieves that rob you of your strength, causing you to play against yourself and fool yourself in the bargain.

A salesman is what his spirit and his determination are. Nothing hurts except that which weakens our minds by weakening our courage.

The salesman should say, "I will stand what comes, I won't give in. No matter what the discouragements, I am going to climb this mountain Success, from the bottom up, just as well as I know how. No matter what happens, I am going to reach the top, if possible, with just as much Pure Grit as I had when I began the journey."

Men Who Sell Things

The "Chicago Examiner," in an editorial on Courage, related the following story:

In this street of Life, walking in the darkness of the shadow, hungry old Satan was out hunting with his dogs, the little imps of human weakness.

A man came walking through Life's street.

Satan said to the little devil, with a bitter face, "Go, get him for me."

Quickly the imp crossed the street, silently and lightly hopped to the man's shoulder. Close in his ear he whispered:

"You are discouraged."

"No," said the man, "I am not discouraged."

"You are discouraged."

The man replied this time, "I do not think I am."

Louder and more decidedly the little imp said again: "I tell you you are discouraged."

The man dropped his head and replied: "Well, I suppose I am."

The imp hopped back to Satan, and said proudly; "I have got him, he is discouraged."

Another man passed. Again old Satan said, "Get him for me."

The proud little demon of discouragement repeated his tactics.

The first time that he said, "You are discouraged," the man replied emphatically, "No."

The second time the man replied, "I tell you I am not discouraged."

The third time he said: "I am not discouraged. You lie."

The man walked down the street, his head up, going toward the light.

The imp of discouragement returned to his master crestfallen.

"I could n't get him. Three times I told him he was discouraged. The third time he called me a liar, and that discouraged me."

Make up your mind, Mr. Salesman, that the little demon whispering discouragement in your ear shall always get from you the answer, "You lie."

Temporary reverses are good for the spirit, strengthening to the mind; not calamities, but real benefits, if we receive them in the proper spirit.

A certain business man told the following story of a clerk in his establishment. The clerk was asked why he remained in a poorly paid position when, by working a little harder and taking a little more interest in the business, he might get into a place that would lead to a salary three or four times as large as he was receiving.

"Oh," he said, "there 's no chance for a fellow to make a hit here; all the good positions are taken, and whenever there 's a prospective vacancy there are three or four fellows waiting to step into it. No; it 's a poor chance a fellow has here; so what 's the use of killing yourself? I 'm not such a fool; I 'm just hanging on here until I get something better. I 've got my lines out in two or three places, places where there are plenty of good chances for a fellow to start in and dig his way up. Just as soon as I get answers to my applications you 'll see me get out of here so quickly that it 'll make your head swim to

watch me. When I get into a good job in one of these other places is when I 'll begin to work. What 's the use killing yourself here? There 's no chance for you."

What a delusion! Poor dunce, playing against yourself and fooling yourself! Employers are not looking for professional floaters; and if you cannot succeed where you are, you will never succeed anywhere. The place you are in right now is just the place for you, if you mean business. If you don't, you will not be wanted long anywhere. From this very class of young men is recruited the vast army of ne'er-do-wells. You must first prove to your own satisfaction and that of your employer that you are a success at what you are doing, before you can hope for something better.

The salesmen who are travelling on limited trains, making large cities, living in first-class hotels, and drawing monthly pay-checks beginning with the figure 3 and up and ending with two ciphers, started where you are and stuck to it.

Where are you on the mountain, reader? If you have climbed for all you are worth and feel tired and a trifle discouraged, look up; safety is there. Remember when on an eminence there is danger in looking down. If the way is more rugged than you thought, do not give up. You may still have reserve strength that you know not of. No man can tell

what he can do until he tries. And it is a moral certainty that "*the reason why most men do not accomplish more is because they do not attempt more.*"

Cast off the dead weight that is dragging you down; throw overboard every pound of unnecessary ballast; let yourself soar in the thought that you possess powers that are yet undiscovered. Make a draft on your reserve force. Exercise new faith in yourself and your surroundings. You cannot navigate far without faith, and some of the best of salesmen have gone down for lack of it. Cut away from the influences and the company that can do you no good. *Seek only the approval of those above you in authority, and you will surely win success.*

CHAPTER III

THE KNOCKER

The man who tears down reputations always gets most of the dirt himself.

What a jolly world of grand morals this would be if every man came up to the standard of perfection he fixes for his neighbor!

SOME one has said: "There are but two kinds of young men, those that are good, and those that are no good."

This scarcely applies to salesmen, for there are many kinds in between.

To which class do you belong?

We have the Knocker, the Order-taker, the Wheelbarrow, the Sky-rocket, the Fussy or Over-anxious, the Quick-tempered, the Know-it-all, the Old-timer, and a few others with accompaniments not altogether in the nature of selling-assets.

In the whole category of men who sell things, the one whom the novice should strive to imitate is the well-rounded, strictly up-to-the-minute business-getter. Such a one is at once ambassador, minister plenipotentiary, and promoter of his house.

The salesman who is worthy of his profession is not only the ambassador of his house, he is in reality the house itself, when he is out in the field. His

every word and action should be clothed with a dignity suitable to the work with which he is intrusted.

In the natural course of business events, it is generally found that large institutions which employ many travellers are able to secure the services of enough really capable ones to make the general average good. If this were not so, and they were obliged to draw their entire selling-strength from the list of misfits mentioned above, they would very shortly find a padlock on the front door and the sheriff in charge.

When one government sends an ambassador to another, a man is selected for the mission who has stood high in the community, and who is endowed with peculiar ability to perform the duties. If a mistake is made, and he is found to be lacking in the necessary qualifications, such as tact, honesty, or loyalty to duty, he is promptly recalled and his place filled by another. Or, if he lacks ability only, he may wake up some fine morning to find that he has been relegated to some unimportant post in an out-of-the-way country.

But to return to salesmen. Beginning with the Knocker and taking them in order, we find them an interesting and heterogeneous group.

The Knocker is the most obnoxious type, and is branded at once as the most useless. He can scarcely be rated as an asset in the selling staff, unless

we take him in the inventory at a discount of ninety per cent. The remaining ten per cent might be realized upon as a job lot, to be sold out in the first clearance sale that comes along.

The editor of "The Philistine" says: "Knocking is criticism, and without criticism there is no advancement."

In making that statement he certainly was not speaking of salesmen, or he would have said, "Knocking is robbery, and the thief is a parasite."

The knocking salesman should not pray, with the Pharisees, "O Lord, make other men as we are," but rather, "Let us see ourselves as others see us." If the latter prayer were granted, they would take the shortest cut possible to the nearest oculist to have their eyes fitted with long-distance, clear-seeing glasses to replace their blue goggles of doubt, hate, and suspicion.

The Knocker reminds me in some of his phases of the story of the man down in the spring branch trying to clear the water so that he could get a pure drink. He was doing all he could to filter the water, when some friend called out to him: "Stranger, come up a little higher and run that hog out of the spring, and it will clear itself."

No trouble then. The hardest work a man ever undertakes in this world is to try to lift himself up while trying to pull his brother down. It is like

trying to pull yourself out of a quicksand; the more you try to work free from it, the deeper you sink. There is no such thing as boosting yourself by knocking some one else.

Did you ever look at yourself from head to foot — look at yourself as a salesman?

Did you ever wake up in the morning and shut your eyes and lie still and say: "Well, suppose every salesman in the house were just like me, what sort of a house would we have? Suppose every salesman in our house knocked as much as I knock, what sort of a house would we have? Suppose every salesman in the house worked as little as I work, how long before the whole thing would go into bankruptcy?"

It is well now and then to get a square, honest look at yourself.

What sort of a salesman are you?

A salesman's tongue has a great deal to do with his salesmanship; or, rather, a salesman's salesmanship has a great deal to do with his tongue.

The Knocker's tongue is full of deadly poison. It is sharp-edged and treacherous as an ever-ready stiletto.

Sit beside the victim of the Knocker. Put your ear to his heart, and you can hear a steady drip, drip, drip, as of blood from a gaping wound.

"What did that?" you say. His reply is: "An unkind tongue wounded it there."

The meanest man on earth is the one who will wound a man's character with his tongue.

The Knocker is no respecter of persons; he knocks the credit man, knocks the buyer, knocks the sales manager, knocks his fellow-travellers; in fact, he knocks everything and everybody in the place, from office boy to president. He even knocks his own interests. Every one but the Knocker himself knows that "the dog that will carry a bone will fetch a bone"; but as a temporary mischief-maker he causes "Maud," the mule of comic-newspaper fame, to appear to have creeping paralysis when compared with him as to their relative kicking merits.

Knocking is a habit, and a bad one. Don't acquire it. If you do, some day you will give yourself a knock-out blow. Remember the old saying, *The man who attends to his own business has not time to attend to the business of others.*

Now, recollect, if you are a salesman and love your house, everything you cannot help, everything you would have warded off if you could, everything you would have conquered if you could, everything in the salesman's life except dishonesty — and knocking is a form of dishonesty — works for good; and no power on earth can make this negative quality work for anybody's good, because dishonesty is the reversal, the throwing out of gear, of the machinery of our nature.

When we begin to undermine the honest efforts of others, we reverse the machinery of our nature and run it backwards. You can no more do good work for your house when you reverse the machinery of your nature than you can make a lawn-mower cut grass when you run it backwards. One is as impossible as the other. *All things work for your good when you are running in harmony with your house* and in line with your house.

When you walk up to a piano and touch a key, and that key is out of tune and out of harmony, it is out of harmony not only with the rest of the keys of the piano, but with everything in the universe that is in harmony with them. But when the piano-tuner walks up to the piano and opens it, and takes out his instruments and works away at that particular string, he restores the harmony that was lost. And success lies in getting into harmony with your house. Then everything moves along harmoniously, adjusting and setting the rules of the house to music. Is it not so?

When your firm bids you do this or that, the command should immediately touch a responsive chord in your nature in sympathy with the work in hand, and then you are in harmony, which makes easy of accomplishment the most difficult task. Your house wills it, and they will do their part to make your daily efforts conduce to your final success.

When you are tempted to believe that your house is going straight to perdition, and that you are the only man on the premises who can save it, think of the incident that occurred in 1864 in the administration of Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States. The political aspect of the whole country was that of a seething, boiling Niagara. Some gentlemen from the West were excited about the commissions or omissions of the Administration. President Lincoln heard them patiently, and then replied: "Gentlemen, suppose all the property you were worth was in gold, and you had put it in the hands of Blondin to carry across the Niagara River on a rope; would you shake the cable or keep shouting out to him, 'Blondin, stand up a little straighter!' 'Blondin, stoop a little more!' 'Go a little faster!' 'Lean a little more to the south!' 'Blondin, lean a little more to the north'? No; you would hold your breath, as well as your tongue, and keep your hand off until he was safe over. The Government is carrying an immense weight. Untold treasures are in our hands. Keep silence, and we 'll get you safe across."

Knocking or "kicking" salesmen classify themselves as among the reform forces.

Inasmuch as their object seems to be the immediate reformation of the entire business world, they are hopelessly beyond argument, and therefore the

best course for a sensible salesman to pursue with regard to them is to leave them alone, and let them kick. They don't suggest any remedies, but they just kick, and there are always a few of the weaker sort standing around to give them encouragement and assistance.

To reform the whole earth and make it over different is a job that only the saints can tackle.

Speaker Cannon, of the House of Representatives, paid more attention during the political campaign of 1906 to the reform forces than to any other faction.

"We have had ten years," said he, "of uninterrupted prosperity under the management of the Republican party, but in spite of this there are here and there among our eighty-five millions of people kickers whose vanity leads them to believe they could manage things much better if they had the chance. . . . . We used to have a mule, and when we used to put him in the log barn and give him a full feed of oats, as soon as he had eaten the oats he'd begin to kick and bray. We never could figure out whether he was braying because he was kicking, or kicking because he was braying. But all we did was to keep out of the barn and let him kick and bray all he wanted to."

That's all you can do with the kickers — let them alone. They are beyond reasoning with.

Your house has enough to take up all its attention with things that are happening every day, without bothering about things that can't be mended or with things that are going to happen some time in the future, except, perhaps, to ask your resignation if you can't break the habit of knocking.

What you have to do is to take care of the things that are within the sphere of your duty, and you will have no time to bother about things that do not concern you. That's what your house is doing, and what the men are doing who head the sales list in your house.

The Knocker is bad enough, but his friends who stand around in foolish little cliques encouraging him are no better. He at least has the courage of his convictions, such as they are, while those others stay around in the dark and act as cat's paw to pull his chestnuts out of the fire.

The Knocker is of the least account in the entire group of negative salesmen. The others try to amount to something in their own way, but he has been mean ever since he was born.

In reviewing them all, I want you to understand — if you are a Knocker — that you are worse than a hundred of the poorest salesmen put together.

The most stupid Knocker of the entire kicking class is the one who seems to take peculiar delight in running down his competitors.

The Knocker

There is no surer help to the efforts of a salesman than that which comes through speaking well of his rivals in business whenever opportunity presents itself, and that not merely in the sense implied by the witty preacher who said, while seeking a goodly collection from a large audience, "In order to get a good collection nowadays an audience must be assured beyond a reasonable doubt that it will get back two dollars for every one put in the box." Kindness for kindness' sake alone is its own reward.

When I was about to make my first trip on the road, my employer came to me and said: "I hope you can sell Mr. —— at ——. If you succeed in getting a bill there, we will give you a long credit mark. As yet no man calling from our house has been able to interest him."

On my arrival there, I was given a cold reception. Quite naturally, I was anxious to land an order, as can well be imagined; but like the rest, I failed, and was greatly crestfallen over my defeat.

I kept on drumming that customer, determined that I would get him sooner or later. About the time of my fourth visit he surprised me by saying: "I need some goods to-day. If you have what I want, you 'll get a good order."

When he had finished looking through my sample line, he turned to me with, "Do you know why I am giving you a trial?"

I told him I supposed it was because I had happened along when he was out of goods.

"Well," said he, "that is only part of the reason. The first time you called at my place you asked me what house I traded with mostly, and you spoke so highly of them that I made up my mind you would give me a square deal if you had a chance."

I sold that man goods until he retired from business, ten years later, and he was one of the best friends I had.

President Roosevelt, in his last message to Congress, said: "Science in business is advanced as never before. No one of us can make the world move on very far, but it moves at all only when each one of a very large number does his duty. Our duty is not in doing what *we* think is best, or what is best for ourselves, but in doing what is best for the common good of all."

There are people who believe that criticism and fault-finding are indicative of wisdom, and that the man who performs his daily task quietly and without murmur is lacking in the substantial qualities of mind. To be disparaged is the penalty Brilliance must ever pay to Dulness.

A psychologist tells us: "In each human being there are four personalities, namely; first, John as he is known to himself; second, John as he is known to his friends; third, John as he is known to his

enemies; fourth, the real John, who is known only to his Maker, and on whom every deed of the other Johns leaves its impress for good or evil. Those who love us see us at our best, and only *by striving the soul grows stronger.*"

However perfect a piece of mechanism may be, it must be kept well oiled, in order that it may perform its functions properly. In the same manner the house and its salesmen must fit together and work harmoniously; yet none the less there will occasionally be found external and internal causes which create friction or clog the wheels.

The "petty dust" of daily business life is more than apt to upset the mental machinery, and the best lubricant is to be found in tact combined with humor. A kind word or thoughtful silence, which sometimes is better than speech, a boost in place of a knock, each has its place in keeping the wheels of commerce running smoothly along the roadway of business life. So that, after all, the conclusion of the whole matter may be found in the old rule, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

Boost, brother, boost! Don't knock.

"What a mighty power there is that regulation of an establishment secured by cheerful willingness among all concerned to carry out the laws; a willingness that makes every member of the organization an agent in the interests of its common good!"

Men Who Sell Things

"In the mud and scum of things,
Something always, always sings."

"Drop an unkind word, or careless—in a minute it is gone,
And there's half a hundred ripples circling on, and on, and on;
They keep spreading, spreading, spreading from the centre as they go,
And there ain't no way to stop them, once you've started them to flow.
Drop an unkind word, or careless — in a minute you forget,
But there 's little waves a-flowing, and there 's ripples circling yet;
And perhaps in some sad heart a mighty wave of tears you've stirred,
And disturbed a life that's happy, when you dropped that unkind word."

CHAPTER IV

THE ORDER-TAKER

It's a good thing for the man who looks at the corns on his hands to remember that on Easy Street the corns are on the heart.

THE Order-taker and the Drone are identical. Men of this stamp while waiting for an inspiration would find success at once, if they were not so afraid of a little perspiration.

The Salesman goes out and digs up business, while the Order-taker just shambles around, waiting to be fed, like the hippopotamus in the menagerie. The only difference is that his capacity is more limited. Even having things thrown to him worries and wearies him. Mental or physical courage is lacking in his make-up to the extent that anything like effort of any sort is foreign to his comprehension when it is necessary to go after business.

As says the rag-time song, the Drone aimlessly wanders through life in the atmosphere of — "I don't know where I'm going, but I'm on my way." He is bright enough in many respects, but a natural born ne'er-do-well.

Imagine a salesman with just sufficient energy to send out advance cards and check trunks from one town to another; whose sole ambition seems

centred in drawing his breath and his pay, and you have a life-size picture of the Order-taker.

The Order-taker drops out of the race at the first wayside shelter on the slope of Mount Success; but he is a different type from the Knocker, as he does no actual harm, though he fails to get anywhere. Besides, knocking requires energy, even if perverted. The mediocre capacity must be eked out by brave resolve and persistent effort.

When the old lady was training her son for the trapeze, the boy made three or four rather ineffectual efforts to get over the bar. Then she was heard to suggest: "John Henry Hobbs, if you will just throw your heart over the bar, your body will follow."

And thus it is with the salesman who is inclined to take things easy. *If he will just throw his heart into his work, success will follow,* and then he will see the employer's and employee's interests going forward hand in hand, as they should go, supporting each other.

William Matthews, at one time Professor of English Literature in the Chicago University, writing on the subject Self-reliance, in "Getting On in the World," says:

"A lobster, when left high and dry among the rocks, has not instinct and energy enough to work his way back to the sea, but waits for the sea to come to him. If it does

not come, he remains where he is, and dies, although the slightest effort would enable him to reach the waves, which are perhaps tossing and tumbling within a yard of him."

The world is full of human lobsters, men stranded on the rocks of business, who, instead of putting forth their own energies, are waiting for some grand billow of good fortune to set them afloat. There are many young men of vivid imaginations, who, instead of carrying their own burdens, are always dreaming of some Hercules coming to give them a lift.

"*The hardest fortune of all is to find fortune easily.*"

Good hard work is one of the richest blessings that God has given man. The Idler, the Drone, the Order-taker, or whatever we may choose to call him, either in salesmanship or out of it,— the man who fails to make the most of his privilege to work and amount to something,— sins not only against his Maker, but against himself and society.

Many an otherwise good salesman has remained all his life in the light-weight class, solely because he lacked faith in himself.

"*Faith is the lever that moves mountains.*"

"Faith is not faith until it gets into your fingers and your feet."

Faith begets faith. The salesman who has faith in himself has faith in his territory and faith

in his house. His employers and his customers, seeing the strength of his position, place their faith in him also.

There is no standard broad enough or high enough with which to measure the value of faith in the commercial world. It is the Alpha and Omega of all business activity. It is the guiding star, shedding its beams of trust, confidence, good-will, and good-cheer along the pathway of every successful transaction, large or small. There can be absolutely no trade without faith; hence, its indispensableness as a commercial asset.

The salesman of little faith in himself is not only enveloped in doubt and mistrust, so far as his ability to win for himself is concerned, but his faith in his proposition, his employers, and his fellow-workers hangs in the balance, reducing his chances for success to the minimum. He is apt to be peevish, ill-natured, and enshrouded in an atmosphere of insecurity, and he soon drops into oblivion or joins the large class of "floaters" who are continually looking for a job.

A salesman, to succeed, must not only have faith in himself, but faith in the article he is selling. He should approach his customer in such a manner as to leave no room for doubt that he himself believes what he says of the article he has to sell.

In a salesman of this character, faith is the

source of courage, industry, and perseverance. It makes for him a strong personality. He surmounts all troubles by dint of his own energy. His name spells S–U–C–C–E–S–S.

Some one has said: "The trouble with too many young men is that their wishbones are where their backbones ought to be."

A practical psychologist asks the question:

"Did you ever say 'I can' and 'I will' with the strong feeling that you spoke the truth? If so, you then felt within you the thrill which seems to cause every atom of your being to vibrate in harmony with some note in the grand scale of life which has been sounded by the I AM — the real self.

"If so, you caught a momentary glimpse of the inner light; heard a note of the song of the soul; were conscious for a moment of yourself, and in that moment you knew that untold power and possibilities were yours. You felt somehow that you were in touch with the Source of all strength, knowledge, happiness, and peace. You felt that you were equal to any task, capable of executing any undertaking. All the universe seemed to vibrate in the same key with your thought."

Sam Jones, the famous Southern wit, lecturing on Faith, once said:

"You well know what it is to pull on a cold collar. It takes a good tame horse to do it. You hitch him up of a cold, frosty morning, hitch him to a big load, and he sets to and pulls it off like a mule. That is what we call a work of faith, it is pulling on a cold collar. That kind of horse you can hitch to a tree on a frosty morning, and he will

make a hundred set pulls at it. That is what we call a work of faith,— pulling on a cold collar.

"I knew a fellow once who had a wagon-load of wood to haul to camp, and it was a cold morning. He hitched up his horses, but they would not pull a pound. He put a boy on each horse, and then ran them up and down, riding about two or three miles, and got them warmed up, and then hitched them up, and they pulled right off."

A dog will run a rabbit when he feels like doing it, and when he doesn't feel like it he won't.

A salesman of faith will show you what he is by what he does. If you will find me a salesman who is busy for his house, I will show you a salesman that has works of faith and will do his duty whether he feels like it or not.

Some salesmen think that if they do a thing when they do not feel like it, they are hypocrites. Well, we will talk about that some other time.

"I feel it is my duty to do so and so."

Sing it out; you have heard such salesmen, haven't you?

I tell you what it is: to a real live wide-awake salesman, his work is a pleasure; it is a privilege. All others should keep in mind the business aphorism, "They who do no more than they are paid for get paid for no more than they do."

You know, when they first built engines, they put only two wheels on them. They would run and

make schedule time, but schedule time was only just three miles an hour, and it was all they could do to pull one car. After a while they put a jack under that engine and put eight more wheels under it, making ten in all; and that engine will cut along at the rate of fifty miles an hour, and will pull forty cars if you couple them on.

And then came the "great moguls"; those great living, snorting, prancing things of finest steel, with a speed of seventy or eighty miles an hour. That is the difference between the little two-wheeled fellow and the sort they run now. That is the difference between the Order-taker and the professional salesman. There are plenty of little two-wheelers in the business world. Brother, cut that two-wheeled business out, if you ever hope to make a schedule of more than three miles an hour.

What would you think of a man starting from home who would go trotting down the railroad on foot? You ask him why he doesn't take the cars, and he answers: "Well, I feel it is my duty to go on foot."

I remember very well one of these two-wheeled men. He crossed my path when I had been out on the road about three or four years. It was a "Ships-that-pass-in-the-night" sort of experience, which leaves behind the shadowy impression that something crossed your bow in the fading light, but you

could not make out just what manner of craft it was, or where it hailed from.

I had been out on my advance trip with a line of ostrich goods and velvets, and was winding up the last week of an unusually successful Fall business, when I was suddenly stricken with a serious case of blood-poisoning, contracted from opening a water-blister on my hand with a rusty knife-blade. I was working on my way home from northern Michigan, and had but a few towns left, when the doctor ordered me to take the first train home and see a first-class surgeon, adding that I had no time to lose if I valued my life.

I hesitated about taking his advice, hating to give up a winning streak of business; besides, I knew that my rival salesman from our house was working might and main to nose me out of first place on the sales list. That was not all. In the next town I had a slim hold on an account that had started new the season before, and as I was out ahead of my competitors, I felt that my chances were good to sell the customer his opening Fall bill. The doctor finally convinced me that a dead salesman was of very little use; and not wishing to shuffle off this mortal coil at the very outset of my career, I went home and remained there for three weeks.

I worried and chafed under my enforced idleness, realizing that before I could get back to that

town and my new customer, the country would be full of millinery salesmen just as eager for that first bill as I was.

As soon as convalescence set in, I wired him the exact date of my arrival, and not waiting for the bandages to come off, with my arm still in a sling, I set out to do the best I could in handling my trunks with the aid of porters and fellow-travellers.

I arrived on schedule time. Jumping out of the bus, I did not stop to register, but called to the porter to throw my trunks into the best sample-room he had, and was off like a shot for my customer's store.

Entering, I was filled with misgivings, half expecting some salesman had been there and secured that much-coveted bill ahead of me. I greeted him with as much confidence as my shaken faith would permit. I expected it; almost the first thing he said was, "A new man from —— & Co. was here a few days ago." But my hopes arose when he added, "But I did n't buy anything from him. His samples were not opened, and he came in sort o' looking as if he expected to be turned down. I really did want to see his line, and might have given him an order, having heard his house well spoken of; but I guess my greeting was kind of cold. When I said I did n't want anything anyway, and as long as his samples were not unpacked I would n't have him go to the

trouble of opening them just for me, as it would n't pay him, he waited around for a few minutes for further confirmation, and then explained that, owing to his big territory and being late, he was making towns pretty fast, and that if there was n't much I wanted he 'd see me next trip. But I don't believe he will ever make another, do you?"

I thought as he did about it, and it afterwards proved that we were both right. To make a long story short, my friend told me just about what he had said to the other fellow — that he did n't want much, and he had made up his mind that he would wait until he went to market to do his buying.

I reminded him of his desire to see —— & Co.'s line, adding that as he was the only customer there, I was obliged to remain all the afternoon anyway, and would rather put in the time showing him the line than lie around the hotel office doing nothing.

It was not easy to budge him, but he finally said, "Well, my boy, if you have got grit enough to unpack your stuff with a game arm, just to show me your line, I guess I can find time to run over to the sample-room a little later."

He came before I was through unpacking and stayed long enough to give me a bill for over one thousand dollars, and helped me to pack up when we were through.

No, he did n't buy from me out of sympathy for

my crippled condition. He was too good a merchant for that.

On leaving, he said half to himself but loud enough for me to hear, "Most curious fellow I ever saw." Then aloud to me, "Likely I would have given him the bill I have given you if he had n't been so confounded lazy."

While leaning back in the cushions, bumping along over the ties, did you ever say to yourself, "If I am a salesman, I 'm going to be one all over, through and through; but I won't be a little, old, dried-up, knock-kneed, one-horse, shrivelled nothing, anywhere"?

Have n't you had a desire to rise above the sight of the kind of little fellow that you can pack in a sardine-box with nineteen others? You have never known much about salesmanship if you have never felt in your soul that you wanted to be somebody — something — so big that you could fly up, and up, and up. If you have had this sensation, then you know something about what salesmanship is.

Well, now, your house acts on the principle that each individual employee takes part in forming that house. If your employer has forty-five salesmen in his house, and fifteen of them are good salesmen, who love their house and their goods, and thirty others who are indifferent and careless, then you see what sort of house he has — two-thirds of his sales-force

away from loyal duty, and one-third hustling to increase the business.

With forty-five salesmen on the force and only fifteen of them active, that house has all it can do to look after those thirty invalids, and has no time to go out for new business.

Don't you see?

To succeed, you must comply with all the conditions of your house. You might ask me: "What do you mean by conditions?"

Railroads carry you, for instance, on certain conditions. I know of but two — one is that you get your ticket; the other that you get aboard. And just as soon as you comply with these conditions, then all the speed in that engine and all the comfort of that coach are yours to your destination. And when a salesman obeys the orders of his house and backs them up with intelligent service, the success of that house is his success also. And the salesman must learn this fact.

It is not so much a question of who I am, but with what am I intrusted? There is a great deal in that.

I start to cross the Atlantic in a paper box, and as soon as my box gets wet it comes to pieces, and down it goes and I go with it. If I start in one of those grand ocean steamers, then all the strength in her hull, and all the power in her boilers, and all the

skill of her officers are mine, and I'll never go down until she does.

If I commit myself to my own weaknesses, I am no stronger than they; but if I commit myself to the best there is in my profession, and the best there is in my house, I'll never go down until it goes down, with bright, energetic men pumping a constant stream of new life into it. Its course is upward, its sales increasing all the way along.

Just a word to the salesman of the Order-taker class, in whom there is yet a possibility of "warming up."

Business opportunities, like orders, are not waiting around to be served on silver platters. You must dig for them.

"The salesman stimulates desire and really sells something."

Arthur F. Sheldon, president of the Sheldon School of Business Science, and founder of the Science of Salesmanship, is without doubt the greatest authority on salesmanship of any time. To him can be attributed the statement:

"There are ten thousand positions to-day in Chicago which are open to salesmen of high grade at salaries that are almost for the specialists to name and take for the asking.

"Within it almost every man can find his place, provided he has that one thing desired and desirable — information and knowledge of a highly specialized character, with a courage necessary to back it up."

CHAPTER V

THE FUSSY OR OVER-ANXIOUS SALESMAN

Whosoever is in a hurry shows that the thing he is about to do is too big for him. Haste and hurry are very different things.

THE Fussy salesman is generally visionary and a good talker, judging from the ease with which he dispenses the "silvern" article. Oh, no! a little thing like talk never troubles him. It oozes away like molasses from a stave-sprung barrel. Once fairly started, you might as well try to stop Niagara Falls as to shut him off. Control? It is as foreign to him as to a kite without a tail. The speed with which he can talk a customer into a sale and out again causes the Twentieth Century Limited to look like a snow-plough doing duty on a narrow-gauge track.

Talk is a mighty necessary thing in salesmanship, but an equally important thing is to know when to *stop* talking. And the most essential thing of all is to know *how* to talk and what to talk about.

The garrulous salesman is a blue-white optimist, seeing figures that exist only in the fluffy atmosphere in which he soars and soars. A few pounds of ballast accidentally taken aboard now and then allows him to navigate his airship close enough to reality in

sales-making to convince the sales manager that he is not entirely shut out from view above the clouds of lost opportunities. In his futile efforts to "land" something worth while, he drifts aimlessly about with his drag-ropes out, lightly raking the field of opportunities over which he circles. If nothing goes wrong with the gas-bag, he feels that surely sooner or later he will hover long enough in the vicinity of a real proposition to permit his anchor to grapple and hold fast.

It generally happens that while this aërial performance is going on and his customer's patience is being tried with trifling things and meaningless sentences, Mr. Get Busy Salesman comes along and scoops up orders right and left under his very nose.

The salesman who wears his customer out with visionary yarns about himself, and what he intends to do but really never does, will amount to nothing more than a putterer. He is a constant source of concern to his house, until, conscious at last that "the jig is up," he takes himself off to other pastures where the grass looks greener. He floats around from one house to another, until, to his dismay, the truth is at last forced upon him that the richest fields on earth are not for him to enjoy. Passing into oblivion is with him like the character in "David Harum," on the death of whom, his neighbors, asking what was the complaint, were told, "No complaint at all; everybody is satisfied."

The Fussy salesman and his Over-anxious brother are in the same class in many respects. Each in his own way fails to accomplish results. There is hope that the latter will eventually enter into an active sphere of usefulness on learning how to temper his anxiety with a reasonable amount of judgment by aid of the rugged road Experience. The former may as well quit where he is and engage in some other line of business.

Zeal is an admirable and necessary quality in successful salesmanship, the excess of which rarely develops into a permanent or fatal malady. True, pitfalls are encountered now and then, but there is always a chance for the man with this failing, if he is honestly desirous of getting on in the world; while for the Fussy fellow there is but a forlorn hope. He never seems to know how to get right down to business in dead earnest.

At times I like to indulge in base-ball parlance, adapting the expressions of those engaged in the finest of all outdoor sports, the National Game, to the qualities necessary in strictly up-to-the-minute business getting. Slogans of the diamond, such as "ginger up," "get in the game," "it only takes one to hit it," and "take a long lead off," are quite appropriate in salesmanship, and can be adopted with good effect.

Just here I am forcibly reminded of a character known as Fritz, who lined up with my home town

base-ball team. It was in the year 1905. The team was making desperate efforts pennantward. The securing of that much-prized "rag" largely depended on the batting strength of the team. In every other respect they were thoroughly efficient candidates for the high honor that every man on the team was struggling with might and main to secure.

Fritz, the catcher, was one of the best in the business, but when his batting qualities were in question he made an ordinary "sand-lotter" look like a National Leaguer. It was always Fritz's turn to bat just when a hit was most needed to win the game. His intentions were of the best when he walked up to select his club. Most likely Fritz had never been told about the place that is paved with good intentions; but the "fans" had, and when they saw him walk up to the plate their stock went down several points.

The moment Fritz faced the pitcher he was attacked with stage-fright, and danced up and down so that he could not get his eye on the ball to save his life. He just stood there like the Fussy salesman and fanned and fanned and fanned, until the umpire called him out on strikes. His long suit was "hitting the air," and he was never broken of that habit.

A good story is related of two men, both expert swimmers, living in an American city. Their powers of endurance was the subject of admiring com-

ment among their friends, who induced them to compete in a swimming-match. There was neither wager nor prize, but only a friendly contest to determine which was the better swimmer, there being an understanding that the backer of the loser should pay for a dinner for the whole company of spectators.

When the trial began for long-distance swimming, one of the contestants decided that he would force the pace from the outset. He shot ahead with vigorous, powerful strokes, and left his antagonist some distance behind. His friends cheered him exultantly from the shore, and shouted to him to keep up his good work. Excited by these outcries, he redoubled his exertions and increased his lead rapidly.

Meanwhile, his competitor was swimming with steadiness, with a stroke which he could easily maintain for the whole distance. He was not disconcerted by the frantic appeals of his friends to quicken his stroke. He was confident that his competitor was exhausting himself by over-exertion at the outset, and that the race would be won before it was more than half finished.

The two swimmers kept on without changing their tactics until the half-distance stake was not far away. The leader had ceased to gain upon his rival, who was beginning to lessen the distance between them. The first man was showing signs of

distress, while the other was swimming easily and was apparently as fresh as when he started. At the stake the leader threw up his hands and cried out to his rival to come to his aid. The second man, calling upon his reserve power, forged ahead with a few strong strokes, and came up in time to save the exhausted leader from drowning.

"Help me ashore!" gasped the exhausted man. "The race is yours. You need not finish the course."

The weaker man was kept afloat until a boat could be sent to rescue him. Then the stronger man turned the stake and completed the course, swimming with the same long, deliberate stroke with which he had set out. When he went ashore to receive the congratulations of his friends he was apparently none the worse for his prolonged exercise in the water. His success was a triumph of judgment rather than of expert skill or physical endurance, while the other exhausted himself by overstraining unnecessarily in the first half-mile.

That swimming-match is a parable illustrative of many a failure in salesmanship and of many a successful career. Nothing is more dangerous than Fussiness or Over-anxiety in sales-making. It is the long, steady, deliberate stroke, with unused power in reserve behind it, that wins lasting success for the salesman, and makes him a candidate eventually for a junior partnership in his house.

I once had a friend who worked his way up in the dry-goods business from floor-walker in a retail store to the position of assistant silk-buyer in a large wholesale house. The firm of which I was a member was situated in the same block as the one in which he was employed. He came into my office one day and said: "I want your advice. We started together in the business race, but apparently you have been more fortunate than I, for while I am only a buyer's assistant, you are close to the head of your own concern. What is your formula?"

"No formula," said I. "*Every man is the arbiter of his own business destiny.*"

I told him that fortune had not favored me any more than it had favored him; that I did not believe in fortune anyway; and that the only way in which the success of any man could be achieved was by "keeping everlastingly at it." I knew he had changed about considerably, and when he had seen an opportunity had not taken advantage of it. Finally, I frankly told him that I thought in his case retarded advancement was due to his restless disposition more than to any other one thing. He seemed disposed to argue the question, which I answered by saying: "In every large institution there are many opportunities for a man to make the most of himself in a business way."

"Opportunity," said he, "that's it. That is

what I came in to see you about. This is my fourth year with my present firm, and while they are splendid people, I see no chance ahead of me for advancement. At least, it is a case of waiting for dead men's shoes. My salary of fifteen hundred dollars a year is inadequate for the support of a wife and three children. I have an offer from a large specialty house in another city to go on the road at an increase of one thousand dollars, and it's a sore temptation; yet I dislike to leave the old firm. On the other hand, the duty I owe my family is staring me in the face, and I really don't know what to do. What do you think of it?"

"Well," I replied, "you also owe it to your firm and yourself to weigh this matter up very carefully. Personally, I believe in 'sticking to the bush.' *Your opportunity will come in time.* I would not like to advise you positively in a matter like this. A thousand-dollar raise is a big thing for any young man, but I would certainly consult with my firm, if I were you, before doing anything. Put the matter squarely before them. Let them advise you. They will not take advantage of you, and will no doubt make it an object for you to remain."

He departed, promising to do that, but the next I heard from him was that he had accepted the offer made by the specialty house, and had left the old firm, where he was well regarded.

Two months later the head buyer of the silk department of that house dropped dead in the office of a New York hotel, and my friend's old firm was obliged to go outside for some one to fill his place, a position that paid five thousand dollars a year salary, into which there was not the slightest doubt he would have stepped had he refused the other offer and remained where he was.

Many an Over-anxious salesman fails to win ultimate success because he does not realize the opportunity that awaits him through conscientious, faithful labor and continued service in some one place.

The calico-wrapper opportunity of the moment seems to obscure his vision from the sealskin-sacque opportunity of the future. He goes through life without any set purpose at all, with face turned away from the future and its rich possibilities, seemingly content to wander along, worrying in the present, anxiously occupied with a superficial survey of things to the right and to the left, but never ahead and beyond. He is like the man who was so intent on watching what was passing in the street that he failed to notice the open coal-hole directly in his path, until suddenly he found to his astonishment that he was rapidly disappearing into inky blackness.

I actually knew a business man once who was quite handy with carpenter tools and enjoyed his

annual outings at his summer home tinkering with all sorts of odd jobs requiring the use of saw and hammer. It occurred to him one day to build a boat-house over the river which skirted his country place. While sitting on a scaffold directly over the river, he was engaged in putting on the finishing touches, and found it necessary to saw off a cleat that hindered his work. It was late in the afternoon of the last day of his outing. Desirous of finishing his work before leaving for the city, he was rushing things. Grabbing a saw, he began with vigor to despatch what he supposed was the projecting piece, and did not notice that he was actually sawing into the scaffolding on which he was seated instead of the inoffensive cleat. The truth finally flashed on him with a crunching warning, and the next moment he found himself floundering in the river, wildly waving his saw and calling for help.

It does not pay to rush things. The Rome of salesmanship was not built in a day.

It is said of the English General Buller that "he never went around anything that he could butt his head through." And he continued that course in the Boer War, bringing all manner of disaster upon his command, which caused dread anxiety to the home authorities until his recall stopped his mad career. He was replaced by Lord Kitchener, the tactician, who was obliged to overcome Buller's

blunders before he could hope to win a victory for England's forces, which he did in the end by his superior generalship.

The salesman who hopes to win real success must change his negative qualities into positive ones, and then stick to some good reliable house where his chances for growth are assured.

Returning from luncheon one afternoon, I was stopped just across the street from my place of business by a young man whom I had known as a boy, but had forgotten. Extending his hand, he said, "Hello, Mr. Moody! Don't you remember me?"

Failing to recognize him at first, I replied: "You 've got the best of me this time, my friend. Your face seems familiar, but I can't recall your name."

"Why!" said he, "my name is B——. Don't you remember that we worked together as boys with the old firm of S. L. & Co.? You had the linen and white-goods stock, and I had the laces, just across the aisle."

"Yes," I replied, "I do remember you now, but that 's a long time ago, and many changes have taken place on the street. The old firm has retired from business, but I presume you are still in the dry-goods line."

"No. I remained there but a short time after you left. I thought I was n't suited to that line,

and left to go into an insurance office. I soon found that insurance was not to my liking either, and then I tried the retail dry-goods business for a year or two. Realizing that there was no chance whatever in a retail store, I entered a business college to study bookkeeping, but left the course unfinished on being told that if I intended making office work my life's aim I should commence at the practical end of things by taking a position in some large office; but—"

Not knowing where the narrative would end, but realizing that his story was a continued one, I interrupted him with —

"What are you doing now?"

"I 'm studying electrical work in a big factory. No doubt there is a great field in that." Then, as if by second nature, he asked: "What are you doing now?"

Turning, I pointed to the wholesale store across the street which bore my name, saying simply, "I am connected with that firm!"

He seemed not to comprehend for a moment, but finally gasped, "You don't mean to say that you are one of the firm!"

"Yes," I said, "I am."

"Well! How on earth —" His face reddened and he did not finish what he was going to say. Instead he turned eagerly to me with —

"Can't you give me a place in your store? I don't get much pay where I am. Besides, I think that if I could get in with some one who knew me and would take an interest in me I could do much better." And then came the wretched admission that he was a married man and had a wife and two children.

I knew that his case was hopeless. He had tried and condemned himself in the story he had related of his wanderings, but for old time's sake I asked him to call at our office the next day and I would see what I could do for him. We needed an extra man in the shipping room, and gave him the place at a weekly salary of twelve dollars — just double the amount he was receiving at the parting of our ways twelve years before. A raise of fifty cents a week per year for twelve years. Think of it! Yet there are many such cases.

I heard nothing from him for a few days, and then one night the door-bell rang at my residence, and our new assistant shipping clerk was shown in. I greeted him half-dressed, as I was going out for the evening. In some surprise I asked him what I could do for him.

"Well," he said, "you must excuse me for calling at your house, but as you have been kind to me I thought I ought to call and tell you that I am afraid I cannot do the work you have put me at. I don't seem to understand it, and rather than make

mistakes which might embarrass you I have made up my mind to quit."

There was something delicate in that halting confession that touched me, but realizing that his was a case for vigorous action, if the man was to be saved for any good to himself or any one else, I determined to let my engagement wait. Taking a seat by his side, I gave him a heart-to-heart talk, in which matters were not minced regarding his past and checkered career. I pointed out that he really had a good opportunity at last to make something of himself; that I would go out of my way to help him and advance him as rapidly as possible, but that it was up to him to do the rest.

Our talk seemed to bolster him up somewhat, and he left promising to stick it out and do his best. Two months, however, of worrying along with him, in which many interviews took place, convinced us that he was a confirmed ne'er-do-well, and we had to let him out to continue his search for something that "exactly" fitted his capabilities.

I never heard from him after that, but there is little room for doubt that the unfortunate fellow is still looking for a job, a sad example of neglected opportunities and a lack of stick-to-it-iveness.

Opportunities don't often repeat; mistakes do.

The energetic, dead-in-earnest man creates confidence and success.

Don't let the self-satisfied and thoroughly contented persuade you that to-morrow's triumph will compensate for to-day's inaction.

To-morrow is a poor time to catch to-day's opportunities. Nothing great is ever accomplished without trained enthusiasm, persistent energy, and a determination to win.

The man who depends upon to-morrow's efforts is ever a pall-bearer at the bier of lost hopes and dead ambitions.

Results are the golden nuggets dug from to-day's opportunities by earnest endeavor and patient, systematic toil.

The faint-hearted man lacks the power to draw others to himself. He dissipates confidence, and fails utterly to secure prestige with those above him in authority.

A dead fish can float with the tide, but it takes a live one to swim against it.

In this progressive age a man's usefulness, like that of the postage-stamp, consists in his ability to stick to a thing until he gets there.

There is no use in mincing words. Let us look squarely at the facts as they exist, with a clear eye to bettering ourselves if possible. The fact is very clear and pertinent here, that we must meet our antagonists with their own weapons, *hustle.*

There are many salesmen in the world who

persuade themselves into believing that to-morrow, next week, the week after, or next year will surely bring them the results they should have obtained to-day.

Not content with leaning on the broken reed of their own procrastinating methods while others all around them are getting away from them a large share of business easily within their grasp, they try to argue away the chief point adhered to by their more progressive brethren in the race for sales,—namely, that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

Again I must ask the reader's forgiveness in relating a personal experience which seems to fit in right here, and am willing to bear criticism on that point, if my little book prove a help to some in bringing their attention to the necessity of increased energy in the daily routine of their efforts at winning success. My sole purpose in relating this incident is to point out the reason why, in a certain class of salesmen, the negative qualities are outweighed by the positive. In any event, the reader will agree with me that our sins of omission, as well as those of commission, are traceable to our weaknesses, and also that a cure can be effected only through the development of strong qualities.

Our firm had experienced considerable difficulty in drawing business from the West and North-

west through Chicago to the smaller Eastern market in which our house was located. At different times we had employed two or three salesmen in that section without success. On looking the situation over, we concluded that it was necessary for a member of the firm to go out there and do a little missionary work. Having travelled there at an earlier period, I volunteered to make the trip.

The time to make an advance trip with Fall goods being at hand, I immediately mapped up a flyer for ten days, at the end of which I was to meet our buyers in New York. There was no time to lose and keep the Eastern engagement, so I laid out the trip to make close connections.

The first town on the list was Oshkosh, Wisconsin. I arrived there at 4:30 on a hot June afternoon, and planned to get through and leave, if possible, on the 9:30 train the same night.

The sample-rooms were all taken at the Atherton Hotel, and I had to open my trunks in the billiard room, which was used for that purpose when the place was crowded. I made no attempt at a regular display, but simply arranged the trays to be gotten at handily.

Rushing out of a side entrance to make my first call, I ran into Oley, the Swedish porter, who stopped me long enough to say that two rival salesmen from Chicago had been there all day long

winding up their Summer business. Noticing my arrival and seeing me unpacking Fall goods, Oley explained that they had said to him, "He'll have a fine time trying to sell Winter goods with the thermometer 93° in the shade. We have a small line of advance goods along with our Summer stuff, but haven't tried to do any business. Why! You can't even interest the trade in stuff for present use, to say nothing of goods they'll not need for three months to come. He might as well close up and move on. We've been around sounding the trade, and that's the verdict."

"Give them my regards, Oley," I said. "Perhaps they are right, but I'm going to make a stab at it, anyway. Maybe things are not so bad as they predict."

It was a walk of but two blocks to my first customer's store. A few pleasant greetings over, I explained that I was a little pressed for time, and followed up the remark with an earnest appeal for an immediate engagement.

Possibly the urgency of the whole thing impressed them; at any rate, they were over in my room at 5:30. Being quick buyers, they selected a bill amounting to three hundred and fifty dollars by 6:30.

Snatching a mouthful of supper, I hurried back to the sample-room and selected a few samples of

the best selling numbers. These I quickly packed into telescopes and boarded a car for the South Side, across the river. The merchant I wanted to see kept open nights, and I was fortunate in finding him in.

Apologizing for troubling him at that late hour, I began unstrapping my cases, keeping up a running fire of selling-talk in the meanwhile. He protested that he did n't want to buy so far in advance of the season. Perhaps if I had had as much time on my hands as my Chicago rivals I would have listened to him, but I kept right on, ignoring his protests as tactfully as possible, and finally caught his eye with an unusually attractive value in the velvet line.

He called a clerk, and together they took a few samples and retired to the rear of the store to compare them. They talked them over so long that I began to get nervous. It was eight o'clock. But an hour and a half remained in which to return to the hotel, pack up, and catch the train. I was going to interrupt them, when they started toward me, talking earnestly and nodding their heads.

Something in the manner of the dealer told me that the deal was off. Sure enough. Handing back my samples, he said: "You 've got some good values; in fact, I don't mind telling you they are a shade better than the samples sent me by the other houses. I will probably send you an order later on, but I don't want to place it now."

It took me less time to tell him than to write it that I wasn't trying to sell him a cat in a bag; that his own judgment confirmed the quality of my goods. that I had confidence in him, and hoped he had confidence in me; that nothing could be gained by either of us by delay; and if he wanted my goods it would be necessary to book his order right there, as I would not guarantee the prices for forty-eight hours.

That brought him around. When I said good-bye, the perspiration was running down my back, but I had his order for four hundred and fifty dollars safely tucked away in my inside pocket. That made eight hundred dollars for a few hours' work. It was reassuring, to say the least, when I thought of my two Job's comforters back in the hotel wishing me all kinds of good luck.

I made the train by the small margin of a hair; it was pulling in at the depot when I arrived. There was no time to check baggage. Quickly I ordered the drayman to back right up to the baggage car and dump my trunks in without being checked. The station agent was one of the sort that every travelling salesman carries around a club for. He started right in to veto proceedings, but he was a minute late. The conductor shouted, "All aboard!" I threw a half-dollar to the driver, telling him to hurry and drive off. The train pulled out, and I swung onto the rear platform. I stood there and waved

my adieu to the enraged agent, but it was lost in the shuffle, for he was blessing the drayman in three languages.

The conductor let me into the baggage car. Handing the baggageman a cigar, I remarked pleasantly: "I had to break the rules this time, brother. Will you please check these trunks to Green Bay?"

That was rushing things too much for comfort, but I really believe that some salesmen lose business by having so much time on their hands that they don't know what to do with it. Either they do not make the effort, or they talk their customers all around Robin Hood's barn, until patience ceases to be a virtue; the merchants give the orders to the man who attends to his business and then gets away as soon as he can.

Mind you, I haven't said, "Do as I have done, and you will succeed." Not at all; but rather, I have hinted that *you should learn by mistakes how to avoid them.*

Suppose that with a house of one hundred salesmen we have fifteen that are full of faith in their house and their work, and eighty-five that stand out careless and indifferent. What can such a house do? Only fifteen are able to fight, and there are eighty-five fussy, feeble men to look after! Don't you see why that house can make no inroads on the trade of

its competitors? Don't you see why it is that you haven't headed the sales list in your establishment since you first picked up your gripsack?

My plan is to take a common-sense view of the facts. I like to deal with facts. You can't get around a fact. Theories you can brush out of the way, but when you come to a fact you cannot dig under it, and you cannot jump over it; you have to meet it.

A. F. Sheldon, founder of the Sheldon School of Scientific Salesmanship, asked the general manager of the largest institution of its kind in the world the question, "How do you measure the value of an employee?"

The answer was, "By the degree of supervision which he requires. *The less supervision he needs, no matter what he is doing, the more valuable he becomes.*"

His next question was, "What is the cause of the need of supervision?"

Again the answer promptly came, "All supervision is caused by two classes of sins: first, sins of omission; second, sins of commission. *If the employee in any capacity did not omit to do a thing which he should do, and in doing it committed no errors, then he would need no supervision, and his value would be at the highest.*"

The manner in which James Keeley, managing editor of "The Chicago Tribune," with the assistance of Harry Olsen, effected the capture of

Paul O. Stensland, the Chicago bank-wrecker, in Tangier, Morocco, in 1906, exemplifies the sort of enterprise that does things.

It is an admirable lesson in pluck and energy that might well be followed by the class of salesmen who mean well enough, but only partially succeed through puttering around. Intelligent application to instant opportunity is necessary in performing such work. While the detectives were theorizing, "The Tribune" was working. The information received was indefinite, but investigation proved its probable accuracy, and led Messrs. Keeley and Olsen in tracking Stensland to Tangier, and there arresting him.

Speaking of the incident, the leading daily of another city said:

"The arrest of Paul O. Stensland is an indication of what the press can do, and also what the Chicago police cannot do. 'The Chicago Tribune' has found the man for whom twenty-two thousand depositors of the Milwaukee Avenue State Bank were looking, and for whom the united police force of the world was supposed to be looking, while the sensational press was 'discovering' him in every nook and corner of the world in various disguises.

"'The Tribune' was the first to receive something in the nature of a clue to the whereabouts of the missing banker. But the clue was slight, and would have been worthless had it not been followed up with discretion, with patience, and a study of the subject of the pursuit and what a fleeing criminal would be likely to do under the circumstances in which Stensland had placed himself. A study

of the conditions of the various countries in which he might seek refuge was also to be made. It required that knowledge of human nature that after a time becomes a second nature to the trained reporter.

"'The Tribune' in its pursuit of the criminal did not avail itself of the services of a detective. The trained detectives were looking in an altogether different direction for the fleeing banker. It is not too much to say that had it not been for 'The Chicago Tribune,' in all probability the fraudulent banker would never have been discovered, and might have lived in ease on his ill-gotten gains — money of which he had robbed the poor who had confidence in him."

When Mr. Keeley finally cabled "The Tribune" that the actual arrest had taken place, the question of getting the prisoner safely back to the United States was attended with all manner of international complications. It was finally decided to send a stenographer from the office of the State's Attorney to Washington to confer with the State Department in an effort to secure the aid of the United States Government for a proper and immediate transfer. His mission was attended with the usual amount of red tape "necessary" to such procedure, causing dangerous delay.

At this interesting juncture the Washington correspondent of "The Tribune," Raymond W. Patterson, comprehending the necessity for vigorous action, entirely without regard to the traditions of international relations, took matters in his own hands and called upon President Roosevelt at his summer home

at Oyster Bay. A brief interview was all that was necessary to show him that the President appreciated the urgency of the case, and that he was in hearty sympathy with the victims of the wrecked bank.

With characteristic independence, Mr. Roosevelt did not hesitate to overturn the traditions of musty international law, declaring that he would go to any extent necessary to secure the return and subsequent punishment of the bank-wrecker who had stolen millions, and who was denounced as "one of the most obnoxious types of criminals." The interview finished, without a moment's hesitation the President sent a telegram to the Hon. Robert Bacon, Acting Secretary of State at Washington, instructing him concerning the case, stating that it was his desire to appoint James Keeley and Harry Olsen as official representatives to take Stensland in custody.

Stensland arrived in Chicago in due time in charge of his captors, and was duly prosecuted according to law.

The Fussy newspaper man, like the Fussy Salesman, makes a good stroke now and then, when fortune favors him, but in most cases he fools away his best opportunities of doing something worth while. The sort of enterprise exhibited by Keeley and "Raymond" in behalf of their paper is the kind that will enable the salesman to win big scoops of business for his house.

CHAPTER VI

THE WHEELBARROW SALESMAN

Spasmodic attempts to get business rarely succeed permanently. It is the deliberate moving, cautiously, gradually, and intelligently, that makes the final success.

THE Wheelbarrow salesman differs from the Order-taker in that he has going spells once in a while, even though they come in fits and jerks, accompanied by many twists and turns. The wheelbarrow is a mighty useful article, but its inventor never intended that it should play any part in salesmanship.

You know something about the peculiarities of the Wheelbarrow salesman if you are experienced in the style of acrobatic stunts necessary to the navigation of that unwieldly contrivance from which he derives his cognomen in our family of business-getters. One thing I have noticed about the wheelbarrow is, that it is never used to carry a valuable load,—the chances of safe delivery are too slight. Its burden generally consists of bricks, mortar, dirt, or rubbish of some sort. It does very good work when there is nothing in the way to impede its progress, but let it hit the smallest obstacle, and over it goes; or, perchance, if the man at the handle end

of the affair is well versed in its peculiar traits, he can save the load by an extraordinary exhibition of skill and adroitness, known only to the manipulator, and which closely resembles an Indian war-dance.

The salesman who hopes to get on in the world will find it a hard task on one wheel and two handles with some one constantly pushing him from behind. He must be a four-wheeler, with an improved up-to-date motor power of self-energy keeping him constantly on the move.

The one-wheel machine goes along all right on a smooth track with a strong hand to steady it, and two props to keep its balance when not in motion; but it takes four wheels, all well greased and in good running order, on a vehicle stanchly built, to complete any kind of journey in safety in which there is a liability to encounter all manner of obstacles.

I remember, when a youngster, seeing some performers at a circus do a balancing trick on one wheel. I went home and took a wheel off the buggy in the barn, ran a short piece of broom-handle through the hub, and mounted from the horse-block. The wheel made a half-revolution, which I completed, stopping the mad whirl only when my head struck a convenient hitching-post. When the doctor had taken out the stitches, and I was able once more to sit at the table in place of standing, I said,

"No more one-wheel business for me," and immediately turned my attention to fixing a contrivance on my four-wheeled red wagon that enabled me to propel it, riding at the same time, with no danger of a fall.

A wheelbarrow is a dangerous thing at times to itself, its propeller, or anything that happens within short range. I once saw an Irishman laboriously pushing a heavily loaded barrow up a steep incline. His foot slipped, and to save himself he let the whole load go, which was precipitated on the head of a fellow-workman, killing him instantly.

Webster defines the wheelbarrow as "A light vehicle, having two handles and one wheel." Barrow means "a portable carriage," and portable means "capable of being carried easily." Therefore, it must be seen at a glance that a Wheelbarrow salesman is the one who operates on one wheel, is light, has two handles, and is capable of being carried easily.

The two handles might be labelled Push and Pull, it being necessary only for the sales manager to reverse his tactics that the wheelbarrow may be made to go either way.

Under certain conditions it is easier to pull a wheelbarrow than it is to push it; besides the change about, it is less wearing in the long run.

The trouble with this Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

type of salesman is that he bottles up his energy in an hour-glass of indolence and industry, in which the negative and positive qualities are about equally balanced but constantly at variance with each other. When the industry end of the glass is uppermost, splendid work is the result; but the supply gradually runs down into the indolence end until there is not a grain left. Then comes a period of slack work and consequent poor results. A powerful stimulus is required to reverse affairs, when once again industry conquers for a brief time, forcing its enemy, indolence, to the bottom.

The utility of this class of salesman remains an unknown quantity so long as frequent stimulation is necessary to produce even a fair average of results.

Nearly every large institution has its Wheelbarrow salesmen, men who do not seem to regard it as their duty to give their employers the first-fruits of their time and talent under all circumstances.

There is really a fine point of honor involved in that. Perhaps they do not weigh the matter sufficiently to regard it from that standpoint.

Some of them are splendid men in many respects, but lacking in that fine American quality, stick-to-it-iveness; they possess real ability, but are content with lapsing into commonplace ways now and then, instead of steadily working to the limit of their power, Occasional glimpses of their clever-

ness are flashed forth in some particularly bright and successful piece of work. These are mighty good special-inducement fellows, though! I knew one once. His house offered a prize of one hundred dollars in gold, to be awarded to the salesman selling the largest amount of goods of a certain brand within a given length of time. Our Wheelbarrow friend got a hustle on him and won that prize in a walk, but his sales in the aggregate for the period showed him up in the middle of the list — good in spots, changing according to conditions.

It is not often that the salesman has an opportunity to "about face" and brand his firm with being the wheelbarrow instead of himself, but such a thing actually occurred in the early experience of my friend Fuller. Nature had richly endowed him with qualifications for the work of promoting any enterprise, as the results of his later experiences attest. But at the time the event related in this story took place, his selling ability was an unknown quantity, he never having had the chance to put it to a real test.

One day opportunity came knocking at his door, just as it does once or oftener in the life of every man, and he summoned courage enough to present himself at the desk of the manager of a willow-ware house and made application for a position. He was promptly engaged on his own representation of what

he thought he could do, and was put to work selling a new stove polish.

Securing a cloth, the manager opened a fresh box of polish and proceeded to give his new and raw recruit a demonstration of the merits of the article he was to sell, by shining an ordinary piece of paper, producing an elegant lustre, "with little effort and no dust or dirt."

Fuller had yet to learn that what he had just seen was a trick demonstration, and that a similar effect could easily be produced in the same way with almost any other brand. His supreme faith in the article was clinched with the manager's statement that there was "nothing in the world that could begin to compare with it," and he started out with his little sample-case, a box of polish, a rag, and the assurance from the manager that he could find plenty of paper on the retailer's counters with which to make like demonstrations.

The first dealer encountered told him he had "stove polish to burn." But Fuller had it to sell, and with the effect of the manager's demonstration still firing his brain, he was honestly convinced there was no stove polish on earth like his, and he shined papers galore. The fervor of his enthusiasm reflected an added lustre. His customer was forced to admit he had never seen anything like it, and closed by giving him a good order.

In the same way he sold to the next dealer, and the next; in fact, he worked that street from one end to the other, making forty-seven straight sales in three days without a single break. He made every one of those forty-seven dealers believe what he believed himself concerning that stove polish.

Dealer Forty-eight was a stumbling-block, and came pretty near convincing Fuller that salesmanship was a lost art, besides winning a dollar from him on a wager that all stove polish looked and worked alike, backing up his argument with Fuller's own paper demonstration, made with a polish taken from his own shelf.

Stove polish from head to foot, leaving the grocer in much the same condition, Fuller rushed from the store crushed and defeated. He worked the balance of the day with but little success, making a sale to but one in every eight or ten calls. The few orders he did receive were given him as "complimentary," and out of sympathy for his inexperience. His selling-talk, which had been effective principally in his demonstrations, totally deserted him with Number Forty-eight's knock-out blow.

One day Fuller awoke to the fact that he really had a good article. He had proved it by making forty-seven sales without falling down. He asked himself the question: "Why surrender the fine

success I have had at the start because of my experience with Number Forty-eight?"

Pulling himself together, he reasoned out that he had convinced forty-seven dealers that his article was good, and that but one had convinced him that it was no good. Having fought it all out with himself, he determined to make a fresh start, buoyed up with the thought that there were any number of Forty-sevens in his territory. He figured out that he had really possessed some good talking-points, but lost them all on Number Forty-eight.

Fortified with new faith in himself and the article he was selling, his first three or four calls showed him that his earlier methods were again working perfectly. Being unusually adept, in a few months Fuller had mastered the main essentials of the stove-polish business, and along with it one of the most valuable lessons in salesmanship — stick-to-it-iveness. The outcome of his initial experience is best told in his own words:

"I stuck at it for several months, and began to get acquainted with the trade, and learned that on the west side of the city there was a firm that made stove polish, but had practically no market for its goods, and less knowledge of how to push them. I determined to go over and see just what the conditions were. Examining the product, I pronounced it O. K., and made a statement to the proprietor that I could sell his goods.

"Drawing up his chair, he began picturing to me the worst side of a business man's career that I have ever heard

of before or since. Everything in the world seemed to take on a beautiful indigo color. He sat there with his chin between his knees, addressing me in a manner that plainly indicated that he had completely lost his nerve.

"'Young man,' said he, 'the man is not yet born who can sell my polish. I have been plugging away at this business for eight or nine years, and my goods are on the dealers' shelves in the worst possible condition; the cans are rusted out, the polish is hardened, and there is little left of them but a faded label. It is simply out of the question to attempt to regain my lost prestige in the face of all that.'

"While he was outlining his side of a story which too plainly told of a neglected past, I could think of nothing but Number Forty-eight. When he had finished, I asked a few questions relative to what he would do, at the same time thinking of Numbers One, Two, and Three, all along the line to Forty-seven.

"The question of my engagement was finally settled on a liberal commission basis, and I got him to agree that in case I should find a few goods of his manufacture on a dealer's shelves in bad condition he would send fresh goods for the bad stock.

"My first day's income was larger by far than anything I had made for any five or six days' previous effort. I delivered my orders promptly the next morning, but my employer frankly informed me that he did not believe they were honestly taken.

"You can imagine working for an employer of that temperament. I tried to convince him that my orders were honestly taken, and urged him to make an effort to deliver. All the eloquence I could muster failed to move him, until he had sent an insipid three-dollar-a-week clerk around to the dealers to see if the orders were O. K.

"This would not have been so bad had the man who was sent to confirm my work been clever enough to give

some plausible excuse for asking such information. Fortune favored me, as I lost but two orders through this procedure. Within a week or ten days I had gained the manufacturer's confidence, and he began to look upon the bright side of things.

"A few months later the sun was shining on both sides of the street for him. What little help he did have was putting in full time instead of working two or three days per week, and we all got along nicely. The manufacturer began to see his way clear; to think in the proper channels; to figure that if one man could sell his goods, somewhere on this earth there were other men who could do the same."

Fuller is now the Western sales manager for a large chemical plant, but is still on friendly terms with his Wheelbarrow friend, the stove-polish manufacturer, who has become wealthy, and owns and controls a large factory. His advertised brand is a household word the country over. He gives Fuller full credit for literally pushing him up the highway of success to a point that enabled him to proceed smoothly, and he can now dictate in the matter of opening up new territories when engaging additional salesmen. And he is particular to have only the best.

An indispensable requisite to success is concentration, or devotion to one subject. When that subject is faithful, well-rounded service to one's house, the reward is certain. The man who would do one thing well must not attempt a dozen things, however attractive or inviting. The salesman who

would get to the top of his profession must single out each day's work, and into that must pour the whole stream of his activities — all the energies of his hand, eye, tongue, heart, and brain. The salesman of single and intense purpose, he who is not tempted with seductive side-line offers, who believes that his house will pay him just as much salary when the proper time comes as has been offered by a neighboring house to entice him away, is the salesman who will acoomplish lasting results and is everywhere in demand.

A salesman may be able to show great bursts of speed, but if he runs first forward and then backward, to the right and to the left, with periodical fits of looping the loop in between, he will wind up some day by missing the gap altogether.

The work of a salesman is to sell goods. No salesman has ever yet made his mark in the world of salesmanship who was not possessed with a master passion to see his sales climb higher and higher with each bulletin issued from the sales department.

Allan Wilson says: "*Fight hardest when you're on your back. Many a down-and-outer would be an up-and-inner if such action had governed them at the crucial times of their careers.*"

Mr. Wilson tells a good story of the awakening of "Scherer the failure."

Scherer was a failure. He was a miserable sort of a failure. Such a failure was he that his employer told him he was a failure, before all the other salesmen on the force.

Scherer had conducted a small business of his own. Then he became the general agent for his county with the house of the man who later called him down. But it was a small post at best, and so he came into the general office, determined to make a big place for himself on the road.

"Well," said the manager of the sales department, "we have n't got anything against trying a new man."

"But I'm not exactly a new man, Mr. Manager," said he. "I 've handled the firm's line for the last fourteen months in Wheatville County. I 've sold goods in —"

"Well, it 's a little different on the road," replied the sales manager, "but we can find a territory for you, all right."

So they gave him a territory, and a fairly good one, and Scherer tugged his sample-cases to the depot and tried hard to be a real salesman. He was good where he was acquainted and where the house was known. When it came to getting new business he fell down completely. He made a dozen towns in a week, and failed to land one single order; then he got discouraged, and for a week

tended only to fixed trade. And when he was turned down he took it to heart.

He managed to hold his position, but continued to be a failure for four long years. Then, as was his custom, his employer held in his private office a reception for the salesmen of the firm.

Every one was feeling good, and mutual expressions of respect and appreciation passed freely about. Times were good, and Scherer's employer was happy in his attitude toward his men. He told them that never had he been so well served by any set of salesmen in his entire career, that never had the firm done so much business, and that never were the promises of the future so bright and rosy. Not a salesman on the staff but had done himself proud, he said.

Then his eye fell on Scherer the failure, over in the corner. The iron in his employer's soul was touched. "That is," he said, "with one exception. Mr. Scherer, who is our weakest salesman, has failed, as customary, to do justice to the firm and to the territory which he travels. However, the other men have done so well that the handicap of one weak man scarcely has been felt."

Scherer never knew how he left the office that day. He went home and sat with his hands in his lap, forcing himself to realize just what the head had said to him. Then he became terribly ashamed.

Also he was angry, as men grow angry in silence and alone when they have unpleasant thoughts, and he swore considerably. He did n't sleep that night. He lay awake and cursed himself and his employer with great impartiality.

He was in the city for a week's rest, but the next morning found him packing his trunks and cases for the road. He was on the road all the next day, and at nightfall he walked into the office of a man who had twice before refused to see him. The man each year bought goods of the kind he was selling to the extent of $50,000. This time Scherer walked past the office boy and presented his card himself.

"Mr. Blank, I've come to sell you some goods," said Scherer. "You can't afford to stop me from doing it. Will you give me some time now, or shall I call later?"

The man tore the card into bits. "Damn it!" he roared, "where are those office boys?"

"Outside," replied Scherer calmly. "There was only one. I stuffed him under a bench when he tried to stop me. And here's another card. Now do you think I've got a proposition that can interest you?"

The man looked carefully at the new card and laid it down.

"What's your proposition, Mr. Scherer?"

"Whew! What in the world's happened to Scherer?" said the sales manager two weeks later. "He must have gone crazy. Why — why, he's actually got the record for the sales of last week."

He carried his discovery to the head, and the old man smiled grimly. "Scherer? Oh, yes. Well, you never can tell what a horse can do until you've tried your hardest whip on him."

The old saying, "*Stick to your business, and your business will stick to you,*" is the only safe rule for the man who believes that salesmanship is a hop, skip, and jump game, requiring little practice and less brains. We boys used to amuse ourselves with that pastime during recess at school. The hop and the skip looked easy enough on the face of it, and the most awkward of us got along so far without losing our equilibrium or our bets. But the real test came in making the jump. No one could foretell the result of the jump. Balanced on one foot, the spring was made, which ended for most of us amid hoots of derision from our schoolmates. It hurt our feelings and dampened our ardor more than did the header we had taken. It was an exhausting practice, that consumed our energy and our enthusiasm; and how is success possible without enthusiasm?

In urging the importance of sticking to the business of our profession, I do not mean that any

man should be a mere salesman, lest he become a one-wheeler on the barrow plan.

The profession of salesmanship has its peculiar tendencies, which more or less dwarf those that devote themselves to it on a narrow-gauge scale, hampering and preventing them from attaining a well-rounded, healthful, and whole-souled sphere of usefulness. Is not the mechanic in many cases but an animated machine? Does not the salesman too often get a one-wheeled idea of the road, forgetting that the coach in which he travels is built on eight? And do not his indolence, lack of tact, and lack of practical methods give rise to the idea that salesmen are born and not made?

Selling-success cannot be accomplished with one wheel, two handles, and a prop. Every salesman ought to be something more than a spoke, a cog, or a pulley in our great commercial machine.

Think it over, Brother Wheelbarrow, and determine that it is worth while to be a *salesman*, cultivating and developing, so far as you can, all your energies on a four-wheeled plan, and then expend your chief labors on getting there by the sole aid of your own motive power — *educated enthusiasm*.

CHAPTER VII

THE KNOW-IT-ALL SALESMAN

The only shots that count are the shots that hit.
Roosevelt.

Many a man who takes himself very seriously is regarded as a huge joke by others.

Many a fool is vain and self-deceptive; many a man of great power is modest to the last degree.

IT does not follow that because air is life it has any application to salesmanship; but perhaps that is the reason why some salesmen blow so hard.

A noted and witty preacher once said: "The general pulpit style of America is about like this: Here I am, the Rev. Jeremiah Jones, D-o-c-t-o-r of D-i-v-i-n-i-t-y, saved by the grace of God, with a message to deliver. If you will repent and believe what I believe, you will be saved; and if you don't, you will be damned; and I don't care much if you are."

Self-assertiveness is an invaluable quality in salesmanship when properly harnessed, but it can be overworked.

The Know-it-all Salesman claims a large share of the lime-light wherever possible. He seeks to impress every one with whom he comes in contact

with an idea of his astonishing zeal, and by a melodramatic display of activity.

If a man is going to be efficient and successful, he must think more about his work than about himself. The salesman who wants to get to the top by intelligent devotion to work has no time for self-worship.

Salesmanship is like a great river coursing its way onward through the innumerable channels and branches of the world's activities, the shores of which are strewn with wrecks and failures, who held their own personalities as paramount to their work. If the quality of a salesman's work will pass muster with the head of his house, his personality will shine through it unushered by any effort on his part.

Salesmen that talk as though they were well pleased with themselves do not find many in their neighborhood who are well pleased with them. Whenever a salesman gets more self-consciousness than he has sense, he's going to talk foolishness most of the time. Selling-talk and foolishness do not mix well, the one must suffer at the expense of the other.

You associate with salesmanship thought, wisdom, and a reasonable amount of self-restraint, don't you? Now, some salesmen say that they don't have to study, and they don't need the advice

of their sales manager. They can paddle their own canoes.

The president of a great house travelling many men appropriated a large sum to be invested in the education of his corps of salesmen through the organization and equipment of a class in scientific salesmanship.

A few weeks after the study had been installed, he went to one of his salesmen and inquired how he was getting along with the work. The reply was: "The author of that course don't know anything about our line. He can't learn me nothing."

And sure enough he could not.

When selling goods, that salesman just opened his mouth and let come out of it what would, and it was generally filled with air. That is all such a mouth can be filled with. There is many an old air-gun salesman shooting around over his territory. You can't bring down big game with an air-gun.

Three things are necessary to enable a salesman to put up a good selling-talk — knowledge, judgment, and enthusiasm. Buyers associate those qualities with every good selling-talk they hear.

No one will ever do anything for you that you can do for yourself. The sales manager in your house has too much to do to go running around posting lazy salesmen that have no disposition to learn anything new.

You show me a salesman that feels he is all-sufficient in his own knowledge, one who does n't have to keep posted on the latest and best of everything that will aid him in holding and gaining prestige with his trade and his house, and I will show you an Air-gun. I write with safety, for of course there are no Air-guns around your house. I refer to those in the house of your neighbor down in the next block.

The next thing to an Air-gun is an old Powder-gun — one with nothing in it but powder. No trade is ever secured with that. The Powder-gun Salesman shoots at his trade without any shot. His customers enjoy it as much as he does — none of them ever get bagged. But whenever a salesman puts a shell filled with shot into the magazine of his selling-talk and lays the barrel on solid judgment, and takes careful aim, training the sight on the sale he is bent on securing, and fires, he is sure to hit the bull's-eye.

After his shot tells, he can stop and apologize: "I did n't mean to hit you there. I aimed here." That is a salesman who aims where he hits, and hits where he aims.

The greatest power any house ever had is a game salesman — never afraid of competition. And the greatest drawback is the Shotless Salesman, who aims at nothing in particular, and misses everything. He is in the same category with his fussy friend who

is afraid of hurting somebody's feelings if he takes careful aim.

Don't let any one say of you that you talk too much of yourself and your affairs.

A reasonable degree of self-assurance is a good thing; the best of salesmen practise and live self-confidence and self-assertiveness to a certain measure; but the overworking of these qualities is the cause of the failure of many a bright salesman. You are obliged to have something more.

Salesmanship does not consist of what you profess, but it consists of what you are, what you do, and how well you do it. When the doing follows the being, the result swells your sales, increases your chances for ultimate success.

There is no objection to a man professing salesmanship. There is no quarrel with a salesman as long as he lives on a level with what he professes; but when he gets down below that, the sales manager should go for him. When the salesman mixes too much of himself with what he is trying to sell, he is not living on a level with his profession. Self-sufficiency does not secure efficiency.

The real worker must forget self; business is the main thing.

It is hard for the Know-it-all Salesman to realize that nobody is always right.

The man who either will not or cannot efface

himself enough in performing his duties will find it exceedingly difficult to get along. He cannot hope to win the approval of those above him in authority, or to make lasting friends of his customers. He is like a man toiling up an icy glacier without the aid of an alpenstock. The most arduous effort too often means a sudden plunge into the yawning abyss.

CHAPTER VIII

THE QUICK-TEMPERED SALESMAN

If a man opens his door, his dog runs out in the street before he knows it.

Your tongue is a sort of revolving fan to a fire; and the first time you let your tongue go, you are gone.

IT is astonishing how many things will come up to the salesman, and come when he least expects them, upon his tongue.

Some one has told us that we get our idea of the word "temper" from the blacksmith's shop, where the blacksmith is shaping an axe, for instance, and upsetting the blade of it. He heats the blade and pushes it down into the water, and, taking it out, he watches it take its color; and again he pushes it into the water and takes it out and watches it take its color; and then directly he passes it to the hand of the farmer, and says: "I think that is tempered, but I don't know. If you will grind it and take it out to that knotty log and throw it in a time or two, I shall be able to tell you whether it is tempered or not."

And the farmer takes up the axe and goes out to the log and strikes it a time or two, and the axe is full of notches. He takes it back to the blacksmith, and says: "You missed it this time. Look here!

It is notched all over with gaps." And the blacksmith takes it and puts it in the fire again and tests it; and when the owner next takes it out to the log, its edge is all right, and he says: "This edge is perfect." That is where we get our idea of temper.

Many a time the salesman has his disposition upset and tempered, and then he goes out and says: "Well, now, I will never get that way any more. I have got the edge all right this time. I have got it tempered up in every respect." But the first old knotty customer he gets to, away it goes, and the notches are made in it, and the edge is destroyed, and he says: "Dear me! It 's of no use for me to try at all. I did worse this time than I ever did before."

Have n't you ever felt that?

A good temper will stand anything without the breaking out of a gap or the turning of an edge.

There is a great difference between the good-natured salesman and the good-tempered salesman.

We hear people say, "Oh, that person has less temper than anybody I ever saw." Well, he is of less account than anybody you ever saw, if you mean by that that he is simply good-natured.

Given a man with immense temper, and when that temper is of the right sort, then it is you 've got the finest character this world ever saw.

We can have good tempers only with vigilant, watchful care over them. Did you ever manage your temper by clinching your teeth together and not letting your tongue run a bit? Your tongue is a sort of revolving fan to a fire, and the first time you let your tongue go, you are gone. Did you ever try to curb your tongue once? If you 'll do it, you 'll be astonished.

If you are a Quick-tempered Salesman, begin now by saying, "I will watch my temper; I will watch my tongue; I will watch my disposition; I will watch within; I will watch without; I will be vigilant; I won't be surprised by anything. I am going to see my enemy approach; I am going to watch him as he comes, and I am going to meet him as he comes."

A soldier in the last war said: "One of the hardest things I had to do was to lie still under fire."

Humanity wants to fight back, and kick back. But the salesman never fought back, or kicked back, or talked back in his life that he was not sorry that he did it. The best thing is to stand and hold out and let your enemy kick himself to death, and he will soon do that if you will hold right still.

Speaking on the subject of self-control, a noted reformer once said: "If a man called me a liar, I would not get mad and fight him. I would say to

him, 'If I'm a liar I ought to be ashamed of myself; and if I'm not a liar you are a liar.' "

It is a mighty good plan to combat insult and injury with wit or a smile. These quickly disarm our adversary.

The value to the salesman of self-control in meeting the selfishness or insults of a customer, or of managers, is demonstrated over and over again in the life of every man on the road. Many instances occur in the career of every salesman where righteous indignation seems justifiable, but if used at all as an antidote, it should be in homœopathic doses only.

While travelling on the road, long before embarking in business for myself, I once lost my temper under very trying circumstances in dealing with the buyer of a large firm.

Years afterwards I secured the services of a traveller who was intimately acquainted with that buyer. The first time our new man called on him he was surprised at the reception he received upon presenting the firm's card. The man with whom I had quarrelled opened up on our new representative with, "We have been good friends, and you have always given me a square deal. It would be a real pleasure to continue my business relations with you personally, but you can go back and tell your employer that I will see him in Hades before he

gets another dollar's worth of business from my firm."

During the years that followed, our firm was deprived of thousands of dollars' worth of business from him because I had lost my self-control just once.

Get the habit of self-control, and never part with it. When tempted by weakness, keep away as far as possible from the danger-line. There is always a fascination in seeing how near we can go to the edge of a precipice without toppling over.

A wealthy man, owning a fine country home far up on a mountain-side, desired the services of a coachman. The road leading to his place was very dangerous. It skirted the edge of great caverns and made many sharp turns. Several applicants sought the position; the same question was asked each, "How near can you drive to the edge of the precipice without going over?"

The first replied, "I think I could go within two inches."

The wealthy man said, "You will not do."

The second thought he could go within an inch, and was promptly refused.

The third man was an Irishman. His reply was, "Begorra, I'd kape as far away as I could."

Promptly came the answer, "You're the man I'm looking for. The place is yours."

Thomas De Witt Talmage, in one of his most popular lectures, "Big Blunders," speaking of indulgence in bad temper, said:

"Good humor will sell the most goods, plead the best argument, effect the best cure. The poorest business firm in town is Growl, Spitfire & Brothers.

"They blow their clerks. They insult their customers. They quarrel with the draymen. They write impudent duns. They kick the beggars. The children shy off as they pass the street, and the dogs with wild yelps clear the path as they come. Acrid, waspish, fretful, explosive, saturnine, suddenly the money market will be astounded with the defalcation of Growl, Spitfire & Brothers.

"Merryman & Warmgrasp were poor boys when they came from the country. They brought all their possessions in one little pack slung over their shoulders. Two socks, two collars, one jack-knife, a paper of pins, and a hunk of gingerbread which their mother gave them when she kissed them good-bye and told them to be good boys and mind the boss.

"They smiled and laughed and bowed, and worked themselves up higher and higher in the estimation of their employers. They soon had a store on the corner. They were obliging men, and people from the country left their carpet-bags in that store when they came to town.

"Henceforth when the farmers wanted hardware or clothing or books, they went to buy it at the place where their carpet-bags had been treated so kindly. The firm had a way of holding up a yard of cloth and 'shining on' it so that plain cassimere would look almost as well as broadcloth; and an earthen pitcher would glisten like porcelain.

"Not by the force of capital, but by having money-drawer and counting desk and counter and shelves all full of good temper, they rose in society, until to-day Merryman

& Warmgrasp have one of the largest stores, and the most elegant show windows, and the finest carriages, and the prettiest wives in all the town of Shuttleford."

Many a salesman has gone down under his temper. They usually begin by pluming themselves with the idea that their firm does not expect its men to make doormats of themselves for crusty customers to wipe their feet on. That is a greatly overworked idea with those who have a short hold on their tempers. They end with kicking themselves out of that very firm and the good graces of their trade, because they are continually going about with chips on their shoulders, looking for trouble.

People who have never seen the tide come in at the ocean beach do not understand it.

Like the development of a bad temper, the waves creep slowly up at first and then recede. "The tide is going out," says one; "the sea is going down." Ere it is gone another wave comes. This time it reaches a higher point; but it recedes again, and he says, "Surely the tide is going out, and the sea is going down." Again a wave rolls in, this time it comes higher; and presently the tide is full.

So with the advance of an ungoverned temper — its baneful influence engulfs and destroys every chance the salesman ever had to become a power in his profession.

Some one has said, "A melancholy musician

may compose a Dead March, and make harp weep and organ wail; but he will not master a Battle March, or with that grand instrument, the organ, storm the castles of the soul as with flying artillery of light and love and joy, until the organ pipes seem filled with a thousand hosannas."

When a salesman boils over quickly, you soon find out what is in him.

Show courtesy to others, not because they are gentlemen, but because you are one.

CHAPTER IX

THE SKY-ROCKET SALESMAN

A salesman who seeks to establish himself on a good footing by unfair means is soon spotted by his trade and by his fellow-salesmen. He loses the confidence of the first and the friendship of the latter. He is not a salesman, but a bribe-giver, or something worse.

NEARLY every phase of salesmanship has been made an exhaustive subject of discussion at some time or other, but all too little has been said or written concerning the Wear-well salesman. Just here, however, while we are attempting a description of the negative types, the Sky-rocket looms up as the opposite of the Wear-well class, those who serve as beacon-lights along the shore of salesmanship.

The mariner attempting to guide his ship safely into harbor on a dark and stormy night would become hopelessly lost in his bearings with nothing but sky-rockets to beckon him into haven. The steady glare of the trusty light on the rocky point is his one hope.

Sky-rockets are used at sea as signals of distress to attract the attention of passing ships or of the life-saving station, to their helpless condition.

The Sky-rocket salesman is ever a signal of distress, causing much concern to the unfortunate house with which he is connected. A flash in the pan; a streak of light; an outburst of sparks; a thin line of smoke marking its meteoric course; a smell as of something burning — and all is over but the drop of the stick; and who can predict where that will alight?

With a crash and a thud his presence is announced among the list of "also rans," whose breakdown on the course prevented his finishing the race. Happily this type of salesman is gradually disappearing, thanks to the exacting business methods of the present strenuous day.

But the occasional flash of the Sky-rocket on the horizon of professional salesmanship is sufficient cause for reflection to the sales manager, suggesting the necessity of pointing out the true way to ultimate success, which is possible only by sure-footed methods, infinite patience, undaunted courage, and unblemished integrity.

Even when a salesman understands his line thoroughly and knows how trade conditions stand, much depends on the personal qualities he brings into play when interviewing people.

Selling goods of even the highest class is arduous work. The salesman must see that he brings to his task the necessary strength of character. In no

other line of business is a man so quickly reduced to his right level as in salesmanship. He cannot live for long on a false plane.

In brief, salesmanship is a profession that finds room for all kinds of minds. But a man ought not to rate himself too highly at first. When he succeeds in a small way, he assuredly will be asked to fill more important positions.

It is rarely the case that the Sky-rocket salesman is designedly unprofessional in his methods. He is by nature oftener imprudent, or unacquainted with the characteristics of the finished salesman, which are produced only in the school of human endeavor taught by Master Results.

Again he may be the victim of bad training, the result of unrestricted latitude in business-getting.

It is a regrettable fact that some employers are not very scrupulous and exacting as to the ways and means employed by their salesmen, so long as orders are forthcoming.

They wink at the means, satisfying their consciences with the fallacious saying that, fair or foul, it is justified by the end.

Houses that tolerate such methods, though they do not actually encourage them, generally find themselves victimized by their own men. Sooner or later either the sheriff or the receiver takes charge, leaving the unfortunate salesman to drift into other

pursuits, or perchance find his way into the sales force of a competitive institution, where for the first time in his career he is given a real introduction to legitimate, high-grade selling and merchandising methods.

Here the work of the resourceful sales manager is put to a true test. If the subject over which he labors possesses in any degree the rudiments necessary to the making of a successful salesman, the make-over process of true selling education, based on knowledge, character, and honesty, begins.

The reward for time thus expended affords a peculiar sense of gratification to the manager and his house; and to the salesman unbounded happiness and true-blue loyalty on being won over to a sphere of genuine usefulness to himself and others.

The disaster that may be expected to result from bad training in salesmen is exemplified in the experience of a competitor of our firm. The proprietor of that house was a pioneer in the business, and made considerable money in his day. Being an old man, however, he could not adjust himself to modern methods. Competition became too strong for him, and he was finally forced into bankruptcy. The business was taken over by his son, who secured enough money from his wife's people to settle his father's indebtedness at about twenty-five cents on the dollar. The younger man possessed some of his

father's peculiarities, which bordered on the lack of principle. His remaining assets were in the nature of a college education that he did not seem to know what to do with, and a skimmed-milk knowledge of the business.

In spite of these handicaps, he surrounded himself with a fairly capable staff of salesmen, and he really had a working chance to make a success of his undertaking. He started in to manage his business from an office chair, and that kind of management soon runs its course. Like the foolish man who turns on the light to look for a burglar, he stood out boldly in the glare of his unpractical methods, while his salesmen worked out his ruin, doing about as they pleased, secure in the shadow of their graft. Those of the men who had been upright soon lapsed into careless indifference. Others robbed their employer under his very nose, with little fear of prosecution, because he was in such bad financial straits that he did not dare to make a move. In three years ruin and disgrace fell upon that house, and it was again forced out of business, this time for good.

By no means are all Sky-rocket salesmen worth the effort to save them, but this can be determined only by giving each a fair chance.

The trying-out process will usually demonstrate that they possess marked salesmanship ability, which is susceptible of high culture under the right tutorage.

To harness their enthusiasm with judgment, create in them singleness of purpose, impregnate their selling-talk with logical, honest arguments, and endow them with wear-well qualities requires patience; but all this is possible of accomplishment under a firm hand.

Is it worth while?

Certainly. The best salesmen any house ever employed are secured in this way; but there must be a good foundation to build on. The trouble is, many employers will not be bothered with this class. As soon as they discover their weaknesses, out the weaklings go. And what comes then? Order-takers, perhaps, to fill their places.

Give me enthusiasm — even though perverted — rather than indolence.

Now, let us see how it works out.

A Sky-rocket salesman once secured a position with my house on the recommendation of one of our old travellers who knew him by reputation as being a good man. And right here let me emphasize the fact that there is a vast difference between reputation and ability or character. "Character is what a man *is;* reputation is what he seemeth to be."

We fixed up a territory for our new man and started him out with our hopes keyed up to the last peg.

Our confidence was shaken by a letter received

before he had been out a week. He advised us, on making a certain town, that the only merchant to whom we would pass credit was trading at a neighboring house, concluding his statement with a request to send the merchant a letter under plain envelope, addressed in care of our competitor, inviting him to call and inspect our line while in the city.

We replied that we considered his request a breach of business ethics, and that our policy did not countenance such procedure, adding a few side-lights on legitimate, clean-cut, above-board selling methods.

His first trip ended with a gratifying showing in sales as indicated on the surface, and our hopes in him seemed in a fair way to be realized.

A little later, however, goods were returned from every section of his territory, with the statements, "Not ordered," or "Ordered on approval; if not satisfactory to be returned." These claims for credit were accompanied by claims for express charges, extra discounts, and all manner of things not quite consistent with fixed deals. Mr. Sky-rocket had promised to do thus and so, his customers wrote, but investigation of the order sheets sent in failed in every instance to discover any record of these special arrangements. We were continually being placed in the embarrassing position of pitting

the word of our salesman against that of his customers.

We began to realize that our prize package contained a sky-rocket, but, on the whole, enough goods "stuck" to convince us that we really had a good man, provided he could be made over to do business our way. We lost no opportunity of taking him vigorously to task. We gave him to understand how we wished him to govern himself in the discharge of our affairs.

Gradually a little improvement was noticed. Complaints became less frequent and his sales continued to increase; but at best he was nervous. He got mad at little "cropy" customers because they did not buy enough goods to suit him; then he would vary the programme by writing in that this or that line was not up to the standard. When he had exhausted his regular line of specialties, he would wrangle about his expense account. He was always "out" in making a settlement to the house, notwithstanding that it was expressly understood from the beginning that his daily allowance was not to exceed a stipulated amount.

Training that man was more like an experience in fitting two lengths of stove-pipe than anything I have ever undertaken. As soon as one side was nicely adjusted it would bulge out on the other. If you have ever done any stove-pipe fitting, you

know that it is the most exasperating work that man was ever engaged in. Finally, with the aid of many heart-to-heart talks, we convinced him that there was but one way in which he could ever hope to build a safe and sound career; that he would never again have so good a chance to make the best of his opportunities in life; that if he failed to make good with us, the crisis in his business career would have been reached, then would come the reaction in a down-grade pace that all the influence in the world could not check.

The turning-point came at last, and with it the admission from Mr. Sky-rocket that it was indeed a revelation to him to see the manner in which our business was conducted, his great regret being that he had been deprived of such training earlier in life.

His territory, which was generally hated, was in "the enemy's country." Under the new life that our made-over salesman gave it, however, it developed into one of the best selling-assets of the house.

The salesman who secures patronage for the moment by over-colored propositions and loosely fixed principles does no lasting harm to either his trade or his house. He merely fools himself.

If Mr. Sky-rocket will stop cheating himself and look honestly into his career, he can read there pretty accurately what is going to happen to him.

And best of all, not only can he foretell his own business fortune, but he can control it, if he will be guided and warned by the weaknesses written on the pages of his own personality.

If you are a Sky-rocket salesman, don't look at the picture of your past misdirected effort in a careless kind of way.

Don't say, "I 'm just as good a salesman as So-and-so." I know lots of people who might well investigate their own characters. *When you retire for the night look into your own methods, study your own weaknesses.* Tell yourself truthfully just where you fell down on this or that transaction, and follow along the lines of your misconduct to the inevitable end. If you are the least bit of a philosopher, you can see that the end will be failure and discharge, unless you are sincere, and mean to be guided by what you see in your character study.

Make a new and determined effort to put yourself under the sort of control that leads to riches and honor.

The young man going out on the road for the first time, if he is made of the right stuff, will soon learn the importance of knowing what not to do to insure his ultimate success.

A well-known authority on salesmanship says:

"The reason why there is no work in the world like that of the travelling salesman, where a man's actions will

so quickly determine his success or failure, is because perhaps that in no other vocation is a man put so absolutely upon his own honor and ability to work out his own salvation."

The realization of this does not come with the first trip. A salesman gets to know it only after he has been packing and unpacking trunks for several years. The best the salesman can attain to is what he learns by the "rubbing" process, taught only through bitter lessons in the school of experience.

Learn in this school how to avoid doing the wrong thing.

CHAPTER X

THE ALL-HEAD-AND-NO-SOUL SALESMAN

Sharp men do not cut much ice.

THE riches of salesmanship depend as much upon what we sow as what we save.

The All-head man is like a sponge, absorbing everything and giving out nothing. There is neither much of sentiment nor of sympathy in his mental make-up.

We hear it said that the actions of one man proceed from his head, and those of another from his heart. This difference is usually pointed out by the man who prides himself on being "heady." It is well to be "heady," as the term goes, but there is such a thing as being too heady.

A salesman is too "heady" when he measures the value of every sale by mere head-work, and does not allow anything for the natural influence of the soul qualities; when he does not take into consideration the greater results which might have been attained through combining brain stuff with soul stuff.

On the other hand, a salesman is ruled too much by his heart when he disregards his head and either ignorantly or carelessly acts contrary to what sound experience has proven to be true.

Give heed to this, then: *Use your head to make your plans and carry them out, but don't neglect the promptings of your heart,* just because you meet with a few men who have more heart than common sense. Soul qualities, those which spring from the heart, give life to your plans and actions. Balance head action with heart action. I have known some very brainy men who were wretched salesmen, simply because they had neglected to develop soul qualities in gathering their mental equipment together. But you could not get them to see it.

The hardest kind of man to reach is the All-head man. "Stuff and nonsense," says he, when you talk about the soul playing any part in salesmanship. He waves you off with, "That will do for women and children, but don't talk it to me."

Strangely enough, failure is never humble.

That's because some one else is always to blame. We ourselves make our successes; the other fellow makes our failures. Failure, therefore, always thinks itself deserving of the success which it has not achieved.

The science of salesmanship involves the exercise of the positive qualities of the body, mind, and soul. The last is perhaps one of the most important factors in successful salesmanship. Practical psychology as a mighty motive power in business-getting is receiving marked attention on the part of

intelligent commercial men everywhere. If travelling salesmen as a class were to set about the development of the powers and functions of the soul, such as faith, brotherly kindness, and reverence, and apply these in a practical way to the daily routine of their business life, the results of their work would be much enhanced.

On a certain occasion the sales manager of a large house called one of his salesmen to his office and said to him: "Mr. C——, you have represented us for two years in one of the best States in the Union. The results of your work have not been what we might expect. It is not our purpose to discourage you, but you have been two years planting seed down there — now for the harvest. We shall expect you to show largely increased sales during the next year.

"Now, let us examine the situation. You have an excellent territory, backed up by the strongest house in the world in our line; you have a personal asset in the way of general appearance that many men would give thousands to possess—a fine physique, a pleasing countenance, and a good knowledge of the business. But you lack one thing."

"What is that?" asked the now thoroughly abashed but interested listener.

"Soul power, my boy. That's it. You remind me of a fine piece of sculpture I once saw in Rome.

It was a statue of Moses by Michelangelo. The work was so lifelike and so perfect in every detail that the great artist was overcome, and in his excitement struck it a severe blow on the knee, as if to awaken it to life, and commanded, 'Speak, Moses!'

"Your work lacks life — life of a nature born of real interest in your customers. You must cultivate the qualities that will enable you to get close to people, permitting you to play upon the very harpchords of the hearts of those with whom you come in contact. *Learn to draw the sympathies of your trade to you, or you will never make your mark in salesmanship.*

"Now it is an actual fact that men generally act more on feeling than judgment. If you make your customers feel like buying, they are pretty sure to buy, but if they do not feel like it they won't do it, even if they know they ought to. Your failure results from the fact that if there is no desire there is no possibility of doing business.

"Go out now and see if you cannot make your real power lie in your ability to awaken interest and create desire.

"Do not insist upon keeping yourself before your customer; bear in mind that he is not interested in you or your proposition. To make him care, begin as soon as possible by talking about *his* situation, never mentioning yourself. In short, show

your customers that you are deeply interested in them."

Mr. C—— thanked his manager, and, departing, promised to act upon his advice.

The very first day of the following week recorded an order from him for five hundred dollars that he secured from an old "blue line" merchant on a line of goods that he had always bought in another market. He increased his sales that year twenty-seven per cent, and all other departments of his work showed a decided improvement. He continued right on the next year to grow in usefulness to himself and his house, in a way that he had not dreamed of.

The power to sway people is not altogether a gift, by any means. It can be cultivated. In most cases it merely requires an awakening of the soul faculties, as in the career of Mr. C——.

The great majority of salesmen have neglected this side of their education, either from ignorance of its tremendous power as a commercial and selling asset, or because they regarded it from an erroneous standpoint, believing it should be regarded as mere sentimentalism.

The work of the salesman differs little in character from that of the lawyer, the preacher, the actor, or the statesman. In each of these professions success depends on the power to draw and persuade people.

The All-Head-and-No-Soul Salesman

From a business standpoint, the most important self-knowledge is the discernment of one's powers and the possibilities of their development. One of the greatest of these is the power of attraction. Many a great statesman has attained political favors of the highest nature by his wonderful psychological powers.

Some men have the faculty of easily winning consent from the majority of their acquaintances; at least, to almost anything they propose. The essence of this quality is not in their logic — in the arguments and reasons with which they are equipped,— but in arousing an impulse in the listener to agree to the proposition that has been advanced, before hearing all the evidence, which he would usually require before making up his mind.

Some years ago a remarkable demonstration along this line occurred in the city of Chicago, when from some previously unheard of Western town there came William Jennings Bryan, an unknown Congressman, as a delegate to a national political convention. In him this power had reached a wonderful degree of development. It had an irresistible effect on most of the people who heard him. He did not have to force the acceptance of his views on the convention — the convention's acceptance was a matter of course so soon as he claimed its attention. The man from the West sprang into leadership by

acclamation; he received the unanimous nomination for the presidency of the United States, putting all other candidates entirely out of the race.

Psychology forms the very basis of dramatic art. It is that power developed to a marked degree in a minister of the Gospel that causes him to move and sway a great concourse of people, drawing them to himself as one man. Salesman who have developed this quality, in relating experiences of certain transactions, often speak of having felt a peculiar power of persuasion that could not possibly result in anything but success. Let the salesman once taste it, and a peculiar longing to meet people and sell goods will fasten itself upon him, impelling him, like Alexander, to look for new worlds to conquer. He will then have come into full realization of what it means to exert the power of his soul functions to the fullest degree, and his success will be an assured fact.

Merchants will buy a bill from the purely "head" man now and then because he is surrounded with an atmosphere of seeming superiority, but they do not bestow on him large and continued favors. Somehow or other their sympathies are inclined toward the genial fellow who employs genuine whole-heartedness with his headiness.

One of the "headiest" salesmen in our establishment gloried in the boast of a twenty years'

experience on the road. He was a past master at analyzing a proposition; a regular "stand patter" on system. He constantly held up his sleeve a dozen theories for the successful management of every branch of the business, from the shipping department to the office of the president.

He kept a watchful eye on every one about the place. For any one to make a mistake was with him an unpardonable sin. If an error occurred in any department, he went railing and fuming about, unmindful of the fact that his business was that of selling goods; forgetting in his uncharitableness, or rather, perhaps, never having known that *the man who never made a mistake never made a success of business.*

There was a certain geniality of facial expression about this mathematically correct stickler for precise business methods, but there was no sunshine in his soul. He never spoke a kind, helpful word to any one or about any one. He had no sympathy in common with his fellowmen, not the faintest conception of the life-giving precepts founded on the brotherhood of man.

While still a young man, in place of crowning each successive year with increasing sales, he became soured and embittered, on finding his annual sales falling off and his salary cut down. This same man might have been a power in his profession, had

he but known and applied the A B C of practical psychology in the daily routine of his work.

The brand of salesmanship that pays is the sort that plants the seed of the brotherhood of man in the soul, cheeriness and gentleness in the voice and manner, charity toward others in the thoughts, and a sympathetic, whole-souled genuineness in the handshake. There is no better selling-asset on earth.

The All-head and No-soul Salesman must learn to mix soul stuff with his "gray matter," if he ever expects to achieve lasting results.

CHAPTER XI

THE OLD-TIMER

Don't get your headlight behind; reminiscence means stagnation.— Elbert Hubbard.

NEXT to being turned down in his first town, the youthful First-tripper encounters no greater discouragement than that of his initial meeting with the professional pessimistic Old-timer, with his perpetual grouch.

A few words with this grumbler cause the young man to feel that the whole world of salesmanship is a dismal slough; that nowhere in the great desert of commercial life is there a single oasis where the dusty, travel-stained wayfarer may rest his tired limbs and take fresh hope with which to renew his arduous journey. Nothing in the wide, wide world is as good as it used to be; everything is on the highway to perdition. If some good genie could only come along and by a wave of the hand and a "Presto, change" turn the whole business world backward twenty-five or thirty years to where it was when he first took up his gripsack, then the travelling man would have a fair chance.

Where is the commercial traveller who has not encountered him and given him a wide berth? He is to be seen in the hotel lobby, disputing his bill with

the clerk because something or other went wrong. Next he is found quarrelling with the baggage agent at the depot for charging too much excess on his trunks. In the smoking compartment of the train he is telling the boys — if he is fortunate enough to have any listeners — that business has gone to the dogs, and that a travelling man's life at best is nothing but a weary pilgrimage.

If he has a beaten path, he is soon singled out as a bore and left to himself. For the same reason he loses business, his customers finding pleasure in giving their favors to the man who approaches with a light step and a cheery smile.

Not all Old-timers are of this class by any means, but there are enough of them to warrant a passing glance at the type. The best thing for any young man to do is to leave him severely alone to continue his grumbling where no harm may be done.

No character is more beautiful in the business world than that of the man of advanced years who has come all the way down through the trials and uncertainties of a busy career and preserved a cheerful disposition and optimistic temperament, keeping step with all the changes that betoken progress in any line of industry.

You cannot go forward to any prize without leaving behind many things that seem desirable.

Pessimism dwarfs and dries up the soul; it kills ambition.

Honest admiration for progress is an incentive to good work; it develops and gives strength to all the ambitions.

Among commercial travellers there are many men of actual ability whose entire lives have been thrown away because of their bitter hatred for and constant opposition to progress of any sort. A habit of mind once formed is hardly ever lost; and there is no more common habit, unfortunately, among this class than that of envy and bitterness toward innovations. Among salesmen how many words are wasted in decrying the real worth of others! A successful salesman, old or young, is too busy to think of changing times or of what others are doing, unless it be to look occasionally with approval and admiration at the progressive and the successful and say, "I am glad that times are growing better," or, "I am pleased he is doing so well. I shall try to improve also."

Do we not all know instinctively, as soon as we hear a man talk optimistically or praise another freely and highly, that the man who talks thus is himself on the right track? And do we not all know that the man criticising, attacking, and belittling real effort is small, and growing smaller?

Unless the heart is light, we cannot keep pace with the times.

"Bigotry puts blinders on the best of men."

The value of keeping step is humorously illustrated in a story I once heard Alexander H. Revell, a prominent Chicago merchant and public-spirited man, tell on himself.

In the year 1877 he joined a regiment of State militia. On a certain public occasion before Mr. Revell had graduated from the awkward squad, the regiment turned out on dress parade, he being given the end of a line in the march. He had a maiden aunt with soldier blood in her veins, inherited from Colonial days. She, with others, had a prominent place in the store window facing the line of march. As the regiment appeared, her enthusiasm knew no bounds. The old-time spirit fired her blood, as she fairly glowed with satisfaction, commenting on each company as it passed. When the company arrived in which her nephew was marching, she was observed to wear an expression of perplexity, and was heard to remark: "Look! look at that company! Every single man is out of step except my nephew Alexander."

The trouble with every Old-timer who is out of tune with the universe is that he thinks everything in it is out of step and out of harmony but himself.

While engaged in a special line of work in connection with the Chicago Commercial Association

I once had occasion to call to arms a large number of business men in that city eligible to membership. Among the hundreds of replies received there was one from a man old enough to be my grandfather that set my red corpuscles to tingling. It is the best illustration of optimism in old age that I have ever encountered. In the hope that it may inspire every young man, as it did the author, I publish the letter *verbatim.*

"My dear Sir:

"Your kind invitation to become one of the Bully, Busy, Brother Boosters is received, and I am exceedingly sorry to have to send regrets, only on account of my financial inability.

"Yes, I attended the Goodfellowship Supper and took great delight in the many good things that were said about Chicago, and to see the determination of that magnificent body of live men, live workers, showing they were all connected with a live wire, and would make Chicago a good place to live. I first saw Chicago the year that Mr. Wacker said he was born — 1856.

"My heart is with you, and what influence I have shall be used toward making Chicago a greater Chicago, and in doing what I can to improve the condition of my fellowmen.

"I have been closely associated with the whole-

sale grocery trade of Chicago and the entire Northwest for fifty years, and, though seventy-one years old, am an active, live broker, working every day in the year.

"The old man with the napkin in his hand, opposite the word 'ciation' in the lower left hand corner of your 'Appeal to join the Legion,' is me. I just got in by the skin of my face."

The last paragraph of this remarkable letter refers to his attendance at the Goodfellowship Supper.

Our progress is made by what we forget as well as by what we remember. Too many of us remember the wrong things. We need to learn what to forget. We all dislike to remember that we are sometimes wrong and need to be straightened out. It hurts to have the kinks taken out. Of course you have no kinks; but your neighbor has,—we've heard you say so. Well, then, it's a good thing to get a picture of your neighbor. It will help you to learn how he can be straightened. That's a matter of vital importance.

Diplomacy above all other things should become more deep-seated with the salesman who has long served in the harness.

The salesman who is a born diplomat has much to thank the fates and his parents for; but what is still lacking in his princely heritage may be acquired,

like many other valuable qualities; without it the salesman is like a ship without a rudder, caught in the trough of the sea of commercial competition.

Reduced to its lowest terms, diplomacy is just plain, good horse sense.

A diplomat is a man who jumps from in front of a moving train. He does not put dynamite in his oven to dry. He has due respect for the hind quarters of a strange mule. He reins up on perceiving a red light in the centre of the road. He talks to the point when he addresses a brusque business man. He does not feed the animals at the circus. He believes in to-day, and that to-morrow is worth only twenty-four hours of uncertainty. He believes that human nature is the humanest thing on earth, and therefore makes his own deductions for egotism, grouchiness, reserve, penury, and woe; and he does not prod them with a sharp-pointed rod when to do so would bring only defeat.

Chicanery is not diplomacy, and policy is often deceit; both are bogus when measured by the standard of true tact.

It is mean to press an unfair advantage, but the man is a simpleton who refuses to recognize the advantage that is rightly his.

The born salesman, young or old, is the one who towers head and shoulders above his fellows in the science of reading human nature.

There should be no age limit for The Man Who Sells Things, provided he retains his youth in old age.

"*It is better to wear out than to rust out.*" Good hard work, performed with a cheerful disposition or temperament, never yet produced creeping paralysis under three-score years and ten, at least. Age does not disable a man, but inactivity, lack of progressive instinct, or a despondent disposition does.

If the salesman wants to preserve his usefulness and likewise his position, he must not become antiquated in his methods.

One of the most common and most fatal of mistakes made by many middle-aged salesmen is that when they have built up a good trade and are headed well up toward the top of the sales list of their firms, they seem content with the record they have made, and are inclined to rest on their oars. At the precise moment when energy and advancement no longer enter their calculations, decay sets in. The trade that has required years of patient, intelligent toil to establish will soon be gobbled up by energetic young fellows eager for the fray.

I well remember witnessing, when a boy, a twenty-five-mile bicycle race. It was the championship race for the long-distance record of the world, and was participated in by two brothers, famous the country over for speed and power of endurance.

They held all manner of medals and prizes for races won, and were quickly picked as the winners of the race on that day.

It was a beautiful day; the occasion was a gala one; the clear, crisp air was fraught with excitement in anticipation of the results that would determine the world's championship.

The two brothers were cheered again and again as they mounted their wheels and rode leisurely away to what was generally conceded to be another victory to be added to their already long list of conquests in the sport.

The first lap of six miles was finished with the contestants pretty well bunched as they passed the judges' stand. The friends of the favorites expressed surprise because the brothers had not left the others behind at the offset. Confidently, however, they believed that the finish of the half would see them well in the lead.

A great shout rent the air as the riders hove in sight on the second lap. As they came nearer it was observed that the brothers, although riding close together, were distanced several lengths by three others who seemed determined on keeping the lead. As they passed, they apparently were riding easily, with no thought of defeat; but their apparent confidence was not shared by the anxious crowd. A foreboding swept over the throng, not so much from

the position of the riders as from that indefinable suspicion that all was not right.

Cries of dismay were quickly suppressed on the assurance of the over-confident ones that all good riders started that way,— slowly and without effort, — holding in reserve their speed and strength, increasing these as the race continued, and finishing with a burst of both.

Anxiously we waited for the finish of the three-quarters. A cloud of dust announced the leaders in the distance as they rounded the home-stretch. On they came, tearing like mad straight for the wire, where the crowd was thickest. Like a flash they were past — each man was bending lower and working like a Trojan. In a second they were out of sight again around the curve — but that second was all that was necessary to disclose the sickening fact that the distance between the brothers and the first rider had not been diminished. The confident ones still adhered to their first theory, which seemed to bring a measure of assurance, for at last the brothers were working with a determination that bordered on the supernatural.

The agony was soon over. The last half was finished in about half the time the others had required. As the riders again appeared in the home-stretch the vast crowd was on tip-toe, anxiously hoping for the best; which meant that the race

must be won by the favorites. The rider who had held the lead all along was a stranger, and naturally was regarded as an intruder.

All things must end some time, happily or otherwise, and that race was soon finished.

There is little else to tell that cannot easily be imagined; the brothers failed to regain the position lost on the start through over-confidence resultant from past achievements. When they came up to the judges' stand, willing but disappointed hands helped their almost lifeless forms from their wheels, and carried them away from the field of conquest, which, for them, had been turned into defeat. Past honors could not win a race that depended solely on present opportunity. With that defeat, their daring and skill seemed to desert them. Like the bird with the broken wing that never soars so high again, they were not heard much of after that in racing circles.

I have seen many such cases among salesmen in my business career.

Don't become antiquated in your business methods; don't let your customers see that younger men are more energetic, more up-to-date than yourself.

If you want to hold old customers and make new ones every year — which is absolutely necessary — *you must be progressive and aggressive.*

March forward with the times. Then you will

hold your place in the ranks of salesmen as well as any young man starting on the road to-day.

Close your eyes and think of the past, the present, and the future, and —

"Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying,
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying."

It is far better to be optimistic, even though we begin late in life.

"Drop a word of cheer and kindness — just a flash, and it is gone,
But there 's half a hundred ripples circling on, and on, and on,
Bearing hope, and joy, and comfort, on each splashing, dashing wave,
Till you would n't believe the volume of the one kind word you gave.

"Drop a word of cheer and kindness — in a minute you forget,
But there 's gladness still a-swelling, and there 's joy a-circling yet;
And you 've rolled a wave of comfort, whose sweet music can be heard
Over miles and miles of water, just by dropping a kind word."

The Old-Timer

"Hard licks make good luck."

The Base-Ball Game of Life

Life is like a base-ball game,
  With Chance as pitcher: Fate,
Alert, determined, pitiless,
  Stands just behind the plate.

Out in the field are Hopelessness,
  Timidity, and all
Our other weaknesses prepared
  To catch or stop the ball.

The stands are filled with many who
  Accord us hoots and jeers,
And sprinkled with them, are a few
  Who give us honest cheers.

And each man gets his chance to bat,
  And many fan the air,
And now and then one makes a hit,
  And wins out then and there.

Life is like a base-ball game,
  And bitterly we choose
To fasten all the blame on Luck,
  The umpire, when we lose.

E. Kiser, in the "Chicago Record-Herald."

CHAPTER XII

THE RIGHT KIND OF SALESMAN

You shall find no boy's play here, I can tell you.

Thou ever strong upon the stronger side!

Thou Fortune's champion!

When the hurly burly's done. When the battle's lost and won.

To attempt a great work is to become a great worker.

No man rises without being knocked down a few times.

The front door to success lies through the garden of duty.

A salesman's science never dies so long as it is doing something.

SUCCESSFUL salesmanship is a product of the positive qualities. Its component parts might best be indicated in the statement that the Right Kind of a Salesman *has* what his negative brethren have *not*.

In place of being a knocker, he is a booster; in place of being an order-taker, he is a business-getter; in place of being fussy or over-anxious, he is composed, but aggressive; in place of being a wheel-

barrow, he is a Great Mogul; in place of being a know-it-all, he is keen and dignified; in place of being quick-tempered, he is self-poised and genial; in place of being a sky-rocket, he is a wear-weller; in place of being all head and no soul, he is a mixture of both; in place of being an old-timer or a down-and-outer, he is an up-and-inner.

By this I do not mean to imply that right salesmen possess *all* the positive qualities that enter into successful salesmanship, but the average is good. I have known many "top-notchers" in our profession, not one of whom but was marked by some specific qualification that easily distinguished him from the man of mediocre ability.

In every case there showed development of some one positive quality to a marked degree,— such as educated enthusiasm, unswerving fidelity to purpose, persistent determination to win, a thorough knowledge of his own business and a reasonable conception of business interests in general, with a fair balance of other requisites, like tact, honesty, and good-fellowship.

It goes without saying that an indispensable condition for success in every career is contained in a single word — WORK.

The little girl was perfectly correct in her answer when the teacher asked her to give an example of a quadruped.

"A horse," was the reply.

"Correct. Give another example."

"Another horse." No room for doubt there.

And thus, in this and every other age, in the lives of all men who *do things*, there has been but one way to spell success, and that is — W–O–R–K, WORK.

A salesman may be brainy, but he must work; honest, but he must work; diplomatic, but he must work; optimistic, but he must WORK.

If he would graduate from the classes we have been discussing in the nine preceding chapters, and come into the field of endeavor worth while, *he must work.*

What does an optimist do?

Having the choice of many opportunities, he chooses them all. Just the reverse of the pessimist, who, having the choice of two evils, chooses both.

Again, being of good cheer and good faith, he counts every day a good day in his struggle for self-mastery and higher and better results, looking toward permanency.

The only sure way to win is to commence to win from the start, and then—keep everlastingly at it.

Another and most pronounced feature of successful salesmanship is *faith.*

It is exceedingly difficult to get many otherwise bright and capable men to realize that their lack of

success is more often due to a lack of faith in themselves than to any other one thing.

I shall never forget the inspiration that was mine when I first thoroughly learned the lesson of the value of faith in one's self and surroundings.

For several years I was equally interested with four others in a jobbing business which was located in an isolated market, and which yielded but a fair working salary to its owners. I grew restless because we were unable to build the business up to a point of greater profit, and determined to cut loose and seek more lucrative fields, where there would be some possibility of expansion.

Having carefully considered several propositions, I finally selected the one that, so far as I could judge, held forth the best advantages for a permanent and successful future.

The deal closed, I removed to another and much larger city to enter upon a three years' contract as sales manager for the largest house of its kind in the world, employing a force of forty general salesmen and twice as many stock or house men. I entered upon my new duties filled to the brim with enthusiasm, believing that I knew salesmen from A to Z, having travelled myself ten years, before taking charge of our own salesmen in the business that I had just left.

But I soon learned that I still had a great deal to learn in the management of so large a force. The

experience was not only newer and larger than anything I had previously undertaken, but my new house had not up to that time conducted a thorough sales department under a managing head, such as was then being installed in all large concerns.

This meant that I had two new propositions to work out — the organization of the men, and the organization of the department. And right here, with all due respect to our men — for they were the best in the business — let me say that, for a new man coming into a new house to tackle a new proposition like that, where so many travelling salesmen were concerned, was like running a college freshman up against a Rugby foot-ball team for the first time.

Naturally the men regarded me with suspicion and as an intruder, coming among them perhaps to limit their freedom and to make their future a nightmare of red-tape rules and regulations.

Carefully I figured this all out beforehand, and well did I know that I should have to gain their confidence before instituting any radical new policies.

Somehow or other things did not progress as nicely as I had calculated they would, and I began to construe their attitude toward the new departure as being hostile to me. The men were slow in making or reciprocating friendly overtures, and instead of taking things easy, working the meanwhile along the

lines of least resistance, I began to force things; but I soon learned the error of such a policy. Everything was really going along as well as could be expected under the circumstances, but I could not see it that way.

The trouble? Impatience, that's all,—the common fault of most young men who want to get on in the world. *Impatience is about as useless a thing as any young man can encumber himself with.* It produces no end of worry and absolutely nothing in the way of profit.

The trouble I was experiencing was due to impatience, and was for the most part an imaginary and not a real trouble.

If there was discord in our work together, it was simply and solely because I was continually anticipating something of the sort — as the boys would say, "sort of egging it on in my mind."

I worked on in that mental atmosphere for several months, chafing inwardly at this chimerical enmity between the men and their manager, at the same time putting on the best front I could muster.

Finally, one morning I had an awakening. It was a rude shock, but it did the business.

While speeding along on an "L" train to the office, I began to arraign myself something after this fashion

"You're a nice sort of sales manager! You

preach Faith continually to your men, and you have n't a drop in your own veins. You 're not willing to meet your men half-way on confidence, while expecting every man jack o' them to give to you, a stranger, the fullest degree of that precious article. Here you 've been building up trouble for yourself in your mind all these months on account of the sins of the other fellow, when the trouble lies entirely with yourself. Now, this can't go on much longer. This whole business is mere mental moonshine, if you only had good horse sense enough to realize it.

"There 's nothing in the world the matter, except with yourself. Sweep the cobwebs of distrust out of the place where your gray matter is supposed to be — and likewise the despondency out of your mental atmosphere, and things will look different.

"You are doing good work. You have heard no complaint from headquarters. Your methods are all right. Both will win out in time if you 'll give them a fair chance. Now, brace up and *have FAITH in your house, your men, your proposition, and yourself.*

"That 's all you need — just faith, coupled with good horse sense."

There was no rebuttal evidence. The examination finished, on reaching my office I rested the case, and that was all there was to it.

From that hour, things took on a different hue.

Everything connected with my department moved forward with a vigor and a satisfaction that were reassuring, to say the least.

That mental blue-print of myself was my salvation, and added immeasurably to the comfort and well-being of all concerned.

It 's a great thing to have faith in yourself,—not too much, but enough to keep you from slipping backward in the race for success.

The famous Glasgow clergyman, Mr. John McNeil, while preaching in Chicago during the World's Fair year, wishing to emphasize the value of faith, related the following rather remarkable incident which occurred in his career as pastor. Said he:

"Many Christian people have their prayers only half answered because they have not sufficient faith that they will be answered in full. Let me illustrate that.

"During my pastorate of a certain church in ——, we had occasion to make extensive repairs, and the church was heavily in debt. It worried me a great deal, and I made it a subject of much prayer. A stranger called on me one day in my study, and to my utter amazement he said: 'Mr. McNeil, you do not know who I am, and it does not matter. I understand you have a debt on your church that you are anxious to pay. I have heard a great deal about you and the work you are doing, and I want to help you with that debt.'

"Taking a check-book out of his pocket, he tore out a blank and laid it before me on my desk. 'There,' said he, 'fill that out for the amount you require, and I will return later and sign it'; and he was gone before I could stop him.

"I sat there looking at that blank check, failing to comprehend what it all meant. 'Surely,' said I, 'he does not realize that the amount of our debt runs into thousands of pounds sterling. He would never give that much if he knew. But he told me to make it out for the full amount. No. He could n't have known. I 'll put down half the amount. I am afraid when he sees how large it is he will not sign even for that amount.'

"After a little the stranger returned, asked for the check, and with scarcely a glance he affixed his signature, took up his hat, and left without another word.

"Mechanically I looked at the bit of paper, felt it, searched it; at last the name drew and held my gaze. With peculiar force the truth dawned upon me, and likewise the genuineness of the check. The signature was that of a wealthy and philanthropic man whose generous acts were well known to me, although I had never met him before. When I realized that he meant what he said, and could easily have paid the whole amount of the debt, I said, 'O man of little faith! I will never doubt again.'"

That story is a faithful picture of many men in the business life who fail to take opportunity when it is offered.

To every salesman Opportunity opens the door to success. Those who perceive and enter gain the treasure. To those who do not heed, Opportunity says:

Master of human destinies am I;
Fame, love, and fortune on my footsteps wait;
Cities and fields I walk; I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote, and passing by
Hovel and mart and palace, soon or late
I knock unbidden once at every gate.

If sleeping, wake; feasting, rise before
I turn away. It is the hour of fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire, and conquer every foe
Save death; but those who doubt or hesitate,
Condemned to failure, penury, and woe,
Seek me in vain, and uselessly implore.
I answer not, and I return no more.

JOHN J. INGALLS.

Successful salesmen — those who make territories yield a permanent, profitable business, the sort who "wear" well — must and do possess strong positive force.

Doubt befogs mind force. Indecision crucifies precision of action.

Inoculation of doubts in the salesman's mind poisons his enthusiasm.

There is little doubt that the degree of a man's power of persuasion depends upon his earnestness and enthusiasm.

Persistently thinking right means persistently acting right.

The true salesman learns what kind of thoughts count; he thinks them, acts them, until they become a part of his being, forming the directing force in his success.

The Right Kind of Salesman begins by training himself. From the first mistake in the first town of his first trip until he lays down his grip for the last time, he is in constant training.

Early in his career he discovers — and what a power that discovery is! — that the same tactics he would employ in training his horse would, if used upon himself, secure him against doubt and failure.

Over and over again with infinite patience and determination he declares to himself with spirit, "*I Will*" and "*I Am*" — until he comes to a thorough belief in his power to win men and sales. Right thinking and right doing — those are the means by which he keeps his name at the top of the sales list.

The Right Kind of Salesman has no fear of opposition, whether it be from his customers or his competitors.

How well he knows from experience in his early days that to listen to rebuff with ears that hear is but to succumb to a greater force than he himself possesses! Sharp thrusts received in the school of experience cause him to be watchful. Constantly he cultivates the thoughts and habits in himself that teach him how to parry successfully all negative influence from within or without.

All successful salesmen are optimistic. They see only the side of things that wins, and recognize no superior among competitors. The real salesman so schools himself that he is able to sell a poor line of goods on a poorer territory, solely upon the strength of his own personality. What a mighty

human dynamo he is when he finds his lot cast among circumstances wholly congenial! And so the world about him always moves onward to better and bigger things; slowly but surely he leaves behind to rust and shrivel and die every adverse suggestion, everything that has tended to lessen his power.

It is lack of brain activity that keeps the class of salesmen that go round and round and round, year in and year out doing things in the same old way, always hugging the despicable place at the bottom of the sales sheet.

It is lack of the kind of brains that work and dig and sweat till they find a way to get things done, brains that go to the bottom of things, brains that are always looking for better things, brains that never give up a problem till they find a way to solve it.

In mechanics to-day the electric dynamo stands as the highest development of mechanical power. Among salesmen the highest is the human dynamo, the man whose brain is charged with dynamic force; whose heart is on fire with enthusiasm and push; who leads the strenuous life and likes it; who is always dissatisfied, always fighting for bigger and better results; who sets his goal-post far out in the field of endeavor, and knows no rest until he reaches it; who is on the keen scent for

newer and better ideas to help him in his work; who is willing to sweat blood to get what he wants; who believes the head of his house and his manager know as much as he does; who believes the credit man will give both himself and his customers a square deal; who believes that the buyers of the establishment that pays him his salary know as much about buying goods as he does about selling them; who knows that the goods of his house are good goods, the right kind, and will sell, and that he can sell them; who spurns the habits of indifference, of shirking, of mischief-making, of arrogance toward customers, of mutual jealousy, the "click" habit; who avoids, as evidence of weakness, such thoughts as "Oh, what's the use? The sales manager's got it in for me. He's a dreamer, anyway. I always get the worst end of everything, no matter what I do." *The model salesman avoids, as worst of all, the habit of fault-finding and criticism of superiors.* He is the kind of salesman that forms the title of this chapter. It is that kind, and no other, that gets the big prizes in the business game.

What are you, Mr. Salesman?

A human dynamo, or just a common member of the Sons of Rest? Never mind the other fellow — how is it with yourself? That is the question.

Are you cultivating confidence in the value of your own ideas, and in your power to use them?

Did it ever occur to you that you could do as well as others, if you would only bring yourself to believe it?

I have observed in many successful salesmen the desire and willingness to grasp at every good idea from any source that will aid them in making sales. The humblest men in our profession are those who are at the head.

I remember on a certain occasion issuing a statement to our travelling force, which was intended to inspire in them an optimistic survey of the month upon which we were about to enter. The statement contained facts and figures of the month just ended, showing the percentage of increase in various departments, and wound up with a forecast of the month to come as viewed from the standpoint of the managing staff. The men were all in from the road, winding up a period of house trade, and about to depart for a "filling in" trip.

A few minutes after the letter had been distributed, I chanced to saunter down "Salesmen's Row," the name the stock-boys had given the aisle that skirted their long row of desks. My approach was unnoticed by a group of salesmen clustered about the desk of one of our "Sons of Rest," who happened to have the distinction of being the ringleader of a small coterie of professional critics.

He was reading aloud to the others from my

statement, and had reached the part concerning the forecast of the coming month, when he laid the paper down and in a tone of withering sarcasm said, "Umph! The idle dream of an office man."

Catching the exclamation on passing, I wheeled and squarely faced him. Perceiving me standing there for the first time, he became confused. His eyes sought the floor as he blurted out, "A fine letter, sir, and right to the point. Hit the nail right on the head. Yes, sir, hit the nail right on the head."

Six weeks later the man who led the force in point of sales and general efficiency bustled into my office, just in from his trip. Warmly extending his hand, he said in tones of deep appreciation:

"That statement you compiled just before I left home did the business. It helped me wonderfully. It was tough work landing business this trip; but on one occasion when I had sweat blood with a dealer in my sample-room without being able to sell him, I pulled out your letter and read it to him. Stamped as it was with the authority of the house, it made an impression, helping me to get some hard orders that otherwise I would have lost. Send me that kind of stuff as often as you get it out."

His attitude, coupled with that simple statement, furnished the key to his success, namely, that he was alert, and made use of everything that could possibly contribute to his success in sales-making.

A day or two later brought in the other man, the leader of the Order of the Sons of Rest. As may easily be imagined, he reported a poor trip. He had all manner of excuses to offer for his failure. Failure and excuses go together.

If such salesmen could only read what takes place in their employer's mind when weighing the salesmen on his staff, one against another, there would be at least a slight hope of their being graduated from the Order of the Sons of Rest, but their untrained powers of calculation do not admit of their philosophizing so far.

Believing the opportunity was at hand to arouse Mr. S. O. R. Van Winkle from his state of selling-lethargy, I asked him whether or not he had found the statement issued by the sales department just before he left of any use to him on his trip. He looked perplexed, scratched his head, and remarked that he could not remember just what statement I referred to. There were many statements issued. He thought he could find it in his grip, where he carried all current mail from the house; he would look it up when he returned home that evening.

"No matter. Let it go, let it go," said I. "It 's too late to use it now, but let me remind you that that little piece of paper you misinterpreted to your fellow-salesmen as 'An idle dream of an office man' helped one of our men to increase by a goodly

margin, while you have been idling along in an atmosphere of self-satisfied self-efficiency, which has amounted to nothing more than inefficiency."

The salesman who hopes to get on in the world comes to know sooner or later that

Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

The salesman who succeeds believes that his position implies that the firm puts its trust in him, that it calls for the best work in him, and that he should perform it to the best of his ability. That is the only view that brings any satisfaction to the doer.

The salesman who skimps his work not only runs an excellent chance of being detected, but he is constantly injuring himself.

The position of the salesman at the top of the sales sheet may seem to be up-hill, but to the salesman on the down-grade it only increases the opportunities of the up-grade man to try to cheat.

No salesman ever built his house upon the sands but some hurricane came along and blew it over. In this age of lightning-like business changes, who can predict when the next hurricane will arrive? When it comes to the salesman it is better for him to be living in a secure place.

No salesman can tell to what test his salesmanship will be put. It is better, then, to fortify himself

against the day of trial with true knowledge, so that no matter what strain is put upon it, his professional skill will pass through triumphantly and bring to him promotion and honor.

The most selfish salesmen agree that it is poor policy, if nothing worse, to cheat oneself. The best is none too good to attempt.

It is sometimes necessary to have nerve enough to lose some business, in order to gain the best business that is to be secured on your territory. A great many salesmen form the practice in sales-building of holding a dime so close to the eye that they fail utterly to perceive the dollars beyond.

One of the most successful salesmen of my acquaintance employed the quality of self-restraint in his work on the road to a marked degree.

At the time of my first meeting with him he was very much cast down because his house had intimated a desire to let him go, for the reason that his sales did not seem large enough for the territory he was covering — mostly in large cities.

He related his experience to me, and his plan was one of the most logical I have ever known; but during the two years he had been representing that house he had not been able to secure their confidence to the extent that he could frankly confide in them his plans for ultimate success.

We talked things over, and I encouraged him to

persist in his methods, maintaining that they were bound to win, because, whether he knew it or not, he was working along highly scientific lines. I urged him to take his managers more fully into his confidence, which he was shortly afterwards able to do through a fortunate combination of circumstances. And then I watched him advance, which he did by leaps and bounds. To-day he enjoys an enviable reputation for high-grade salesmanship in that very house that wanted to let him out a few years since.

On first entering his territory, his plan was to look the ground over carefully. He then commenced to build, always with an eye to the future. The prospect of immediate sales failed to dazzle him, unless they were of the sort that would make good timber for erecting his superstructure as a whole.

When calling on the trade in a large city, it was entirely foreign to his policy to jump right in and sell to every dealer that had a Bradstreet or Dun rating that would pass muster in the credit department. Instead, he cautiously laid his acquaintance among a limited number of the very best merchants, and began by trying to secure their confidence, and thus draw their sympathy largely to himself and his house. He believed that the best way to do that was not by selling them the largest possible bill every time he had a chance, but by often selling them the smallest bill possible.

Frequently on his return visits, if conditions were not just right, he would not attempt a sale at all, preferring to cement his relations by helpful suggestions, and otherwise strengthen his position in their confidence.

In starting a new customer, he highly favored the plan of selling merely a sample or "sorting up" order. From the small vantage-point gained, step by step he followed up his work, never permitting himself to betray a confidence once reposed in him by overloading a customer.

He was clear-headed, patient, honest, logical, courteous, always on his guard, and extremely tactful. Finally, when his preliminary work was complete, he moved in and took possession of his own. He sells the very best accounts in his territory, and no competitor can either undermine or wrench away from him the confidence his customers repose in him.

To sum up his work from start to finish, he succeeded because he was not over-anxious, and knew the value of making his work fit a set plan.

It is a great thing to be able to play, not a dull game, but a waiting game in salesmanship. The salesman gets what he goes after, provided only he is not afraid to work and sweat. But he must not forget that it is a good thing to sweat mentally once in a while, as well as physically.

There are no dull months for the intelligent

salesman. Dull months are for dull salesmen, not for live ones. If you were a carpenter and your saw was dull, would you say, "I can't work this month; my saw is dull"? No. You would get up early in the morning and file that saw before breakfast. You would make it eat its way through an oak board like a ten-year-old boy through a piece of pumpkin pie.

The live salesman does exactly the same thing. At the first sign of approaching dulness he sharpens up his business tools and goes after business. And he gets it, too.

The salesman who expects trade to be dull, and is willing it should be dull, will have it dull.

Likewise the salesman who expects his customers to have no more confidence in him than in the ordinary salesman will find just what he expects.

The salesman who lags back on the straight and narrow path of rectitude, and says, "I've got my customers just where I want them now, and I'll take pretty good care that they get enough of my goods to keep them from buying elsewhere," just because he has succeeded in winning their confidence for the time being, will get just what he is looking for,— lost prestige, by the shortest possible route. You can have lost prestige, like dull months, if you want it. But you'll be out of date if you get either, because confidence is the basis of all right trade.

The Right Kind of Salesman

The Right Kind of Salesman believes in doing his duty every day, and in doing each duty faithfully.

President Roosevelt tells a good story to urge duty and emphasize his oft-repeated declarations that opportunities are often overlooked.

"I remember down in the village where I lived there was a decent but dreamy young fellow, a little apt to spend his time thinking how well he could have led his life under other conditions. His mother was a hard-working woman. One day he was reading in the paper an account of a fire in New York and the heroic deeds of a fireman in rescuing people from the burning building. His mother was busy around the room. Soon he put down the paper and said, with a sigh, 'Oh, how I would like to rescue somebody from a burning building!'

"His mother answered, 'Well, I'll tell you. This building is not on fire, but if you will get in the kindling wood, I'll be obliged to you.'"

There is a good moral lesson in that for all salesmen.

The way to be a good salesman is to *be a good neighbor to your customers, then a good neighbor to your fellow-salesmen in your own establishment,* and to act toward your firm so that you become the kind of man they are glad to have work for them, or for whom they are glad to work. The business life of the employer and that of the employee should go

hand in hand, supporting one another. Make your firm feel glad to have you in their business family; feel that you are a good man to do business for them, and a good man for them to do business with. That's what the Right Kind of Salesman does. His creed* for all day, and every day in the year except Sunday, is:

"I believe in the goods I am selling, in the firm I am working for, and in my ability to get results.

"I believe that honest goods can be sold to honest men by honest methods.

"I believe in working, not waiting; in laughing, not weeping; in boosting, not knocking; and in the pleasure of selling goods.

"I believe that a man gets what he goes after; that one order to-day is worth two orders to-morrow; and that no man is down and out until he has lost faith in himself.

"I believe in to-day and in the work I am doing; in to-morrow when it comes, and in the work I hope to do; and in the sure reward which the future holds.

"I believe in courtesy, in generosity, in good cheer, in kindness, in friendship, and in honest competition.

"I believe there is an order somewhere for every man ready to take one. I believe I am ready right now."

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CHAPTER XIII

THE MIND AS A MAGNET

He who adopts no high standards
is the only one who never fails.

HALF the pleasure in making a big success consists in knowing just how it has been accomplished — in being able to say, "I used this or that chance to good advantage"; "I should have failed if I had not known just how and when to apply this faculty or that talent, as the case required. How glad I am that I understand myself and my work, and can use what accomplishments I have intelligently!"

But a good many men lose half the pleasure of their success. All they know is that they have worked hard and done their best, and, "as luck would have it," everything has prospered. They are satisfied with the material results, so that it does not occur to them to find out specifically to what powers within themselves these results can be attributed.

If you were to ask them by what steps they had developed into "geniuses," they would have to answer, like Topsy, that they "jest growed." Or they perhaps would privately agree with you, if you called them "born salesmen." It would be more satis-

fying to know just what qualities, alleged to have been born in a man, operate in assuring the success of everything he undertakes.

Any salesman who seriously hopes to improve his work must sometimes weigh very carefully the mental qualifications that tend to make him either a success or a failure. If he is at all thoughtful, he attaches more importance to his progress than he does to the weighing of external conditions, such as labor troubles, a shortage in crops, rumors of war, etc. He knows that the laws that govern the mind's action have a more direct bearing on the results of his work as a salesman than foreign complications and the stringency in trade conditions described as "hard times."

Practical psychology is a mighty motive power in business-getting, and is receiving marked attention on the part of thinking men in various walks of business life.

Some people speak of the "soul power" which gives its possessor some measure of control over others. We hear of ministers and missionary workers who are practically masters of whole communities. Sometimes they are opposed and even persecuted when they begin their work, but end by commanding the docile obedience of the persons who at the start made trouble. Other people describe the same quality as "psychic force." The impor-

tant thing is not so much the name given to such an agency as the fact that it enables a man to make others see and accept his point of view as their own. The vital question is, whether or not it can be used by salesmen as a means for increasing the volume of their orders.

Some salesmen have demonstrated that this can be done. They seldom hear a refusal. Customers who are prejudiced and obdurate forget their natural combativeness when a salesman of the type we are describing appears. He gets their order, sometimes without any argument at all, and almost always without any difficulty or waste of time. It seems natural that all people should agree with him, accept the ideas he advances, and do very nearly what he wants them to do.

Either consciously or unconsciously, he is exercising what has been variously described as "soul power," "psychic force," and "personal magnetism."

There is no question that the power of attraction which gives one man ascendency over others can be cultivated by any one who is sufficiently persistent and painstaking in the effort. Psychologists have not given us any formula for developing this quality. Any one who is interested, however, can suggest ways and means for himself, which will help toward the desired end.

The first step toward accomplishment in this direction is a careful study of the successful men who are described as "born salesmen," and who get their results by exercising this mental force. *It will be found that all men possessed of personal magnetism are very much in earnest. Their intense earnestness is magnetic.* Their minds are filled with one controlling idea—success in whatever undertaking they have in hand.

Their earnestness cannot fail to have its effect on every prospective customer with whom they come in contact. Besides its direct effect on the man addressed, the quality of earnestness in the salesman has also an immediate effect upon himself, in increasing his powers of reasoning and self-expression. By stimulating these powers, and through their agency, it also has an indirect effect upon the customer.

Among people who live much alone, and whose labor exercises their muscles and not their brains, a common and significant phenomenon is observed. We are all familiar with cases where an ignorant, stolid fellow, ordinarily incapable of expressing himself in speech very well, has suddenly found himself gifted with eloquence at some emotional crisis in his life — eloquence not the less splendid and powerful for grammatical inaccuracies.

When this happens, the mind of the speaker

has swept aside by the very force of earnestness the limitations which hampered it in ordinary intercourse. The same principle accounts for a man's ability to improvise means of escape from great and sudden danger, which would have been entirely beyond his ingenuity at other times.

The second step toward gaining the end in view is for the salesman to put himself as far as possible in entire harmony with all the conditions under which he works. To do this, his relations with his house should be candid and agreeable; there should be no rankling remembrances of differences which he may have had with the manager or others in the house. He should have absolute faith in the product he is selling; he should feel in entire sympathy with every prospective customer with whom he talks.

This last is a most important matter. Some salesmen seem to think that it is sufficient if they preserve the outward forms of courtesy and patience and consideration in dealing with a trying customer.

Perhaps the customer's objections are ridiculous because of his ignorance, and prejudiced because of his narrow-mindedness. It is necessary to get down to first principles and improve upon his education before he can form any conception of the value of what is offered him. The salesman who is not genuinely in earnest will hate this slow and

tedious process. He will talk in the kindliest possible manner to his customer, of course, but mentally he will be calling the man a fool, and wondering how such an antiquated specimen managed to survive the flood. The customer, of course, hears what the salesman says, and does not know what the salesman is thinking. Still, he is very likely to be affected by the negative thoughts in the salesman's mind. If he gives his order at all, it is because he has either been beaten in argument or made to feel ashamed of his own conservatism. It is certain that he has not been influenced by the power of attraction.

The salesman who was really in earnest would undertake the same task without any mental reservation. This at least would leave his mind free to devise ways and means by which his prospects might be enlightened. He would have a quicker insight into the circumstances that govern the case. A mutual understanding and appreciation would be established, such as exist when two persons are said to be *en rapport* — a very necessary condition before one mind can exercise any attraction over another.

No one should confuse the mental action described here with hypnotism. It is not recommended to make an attack on the will power of a customer, for that is neither fair play nor practical business. One can, however, develop a power to

arouse the interest and good will of others, so that they will sometimes do voluntarily what a hypnotist seeks to make them do involuntarily. Such power, when acquired, assures some measure of success at least.

CHAPTER XIV

SPECIALIZING EFFORTS

Is your mind on the real game of salesmanship, or on a dozen outside ones?

THIS is the age of the specialist. In the world of *materia medica* the general practitioner is all right in his place; but when you are suffering with some specific ailment that requires a careful diagnosis and more careful treatment, if you value your life, a specialist is called in for consultation.

If you were obliged to engage the services of a lawyer on a difficult case, you would employ a lawyer who had a reputation for being particularly skilful in the very line in which your case is classed. The merchant does not long patronize a salesman whose energy is wavering and whose mind is set on anything and everything but the thing he has to sell. *Singleness of purpose is one of the predominating features of successful salesmanship*, just as it is in any other profession.

Some years ago a city clergyman of inquiring mind sent a number of postal-card inquiries to non-church-going men in the neighborhood in which his church was situated, asking why so few business men attended church. He received many interesting replies, but the one that opened his eyes and set

him to thinking hard was from a travelling man. It ran something like this:

"The doctor practises medicine; the lawyer practises law; a politician talks politics, and the business man talks his business; but the average modern clergyman of the so-called new school talks everything and preaches everything but the Gospel, the thing he was ordained to preach. Business men, or any other class of men, except, perhaps, Beau Brummells, do not care to go to church and listen to talks about the boys' brigade, the girls' cooking school, the ladies' sewing society, a treatise on the latest novel, nor side talks on current events of the day."

The salesman who wanders about in his profession, like the Mississippi River seeking a straight course but not finding it, is not unlike the minister portrayed by our friend the travelling man.

If you are selling shoes, talk shoes; dry goods, talk dry goods; clothing, talk clothing. *Keep your mind on the one important thing.*

Your customers do not care to discuss with you the candidacy of the next President of the United States; whether your baby has a new tooth or a dozen, your wife's disposition, nor the disposition of your neighbors. Neither are they interested in your competitors from your point of view. Their whole mind is centred, so far as you are concerned, on

what you can do for them with your goods, not the other fellow's.

Concentration — putting your real thought in your real work; that is it.

You don't need to waste time reading this chapter if you are morally certain that the best that is in you is being used every hour, and used to give your customers, your house, and yourself the best chance possible,— maximum results with minimum waste; and that applies to everything pertaining to your work — energy, time, expense, territory, and all.

Among the thousands of salesmen there may be a few that play the game of salesmanship as a good checker-player plays the game of checkers. The few in the thousands do not need to think about the importance of concentration, but a very great majority of salesmen do need to realize what oneness of purpose might mean to them.

Every salesman wants something that he has not got. "His wish-bone may be where his backbone ought to be," but he wishes just as if Nature had made him right.

There is not a single salesman that is not planning in a more or less aimless way to do something, to get somewhere in life's journey, to be something worthy of the recognition of his superiors; and there is really not one that could not have his heart's desire, or at least succeed in a fair measure, if he

would wear that wish-bone in the place for which it was originally intended. Keeping his mind on the essential things in salesmanship, and off other things, will help wonderfully his desire to get, do, and be something more than a wayfarer on the highway of success.

Have you ever seen two salesmen with relatively equal chances — a good salesman and a bad salesman?

The bad salesman makes excuses for himself at the end of every trip, all through the year, and at the end takes a cut in his salary or looks for another position. *The good salesman plans his year's work from the beginning.* Carefully he studies his territory, making his work fit his set plan; watches every move of his competitors; takes every vantage-point smilingly, easily, but fairly, and wins in the end because his mind has been on his business.

One of the most important things to the average salesman in specializing his efforts is to confine his work to as limited a territory as possible, insuring profitable returns for energy expended. Seven out of ten salesmen travelling with trunks and representing wholesale concerns, cover from 33⅓ to 50 per cent more territory than is necessary to produce the best results to be obtained. Few, apparently, recognize the fact that *concentration of energy on a limited number of accounts produces in the end much more*

satisfactory business than the same results reaped from a broader field. A little soil well tilled is infinitely better than a large acreage half raked over.

Your territory is an asset of your house just as much as its surplus capital, stock, or book accounts. The worth of your territory as an asset is gauged entirely by the manner in which it is gone over. This does not apply to all lines in the manufacturing world, but it is invariably the case with jobbing houses or wholesalers in any line.

The too infrequent calling upon customers leaves a loophole for your trade to escape and scatter its accounts among a large number of houses; but this escape could not be possible if you would visit your customers oftener. Every time you give your competitors a chance to wean away your customers' accounts and likewise their confidence, you render your trade of an uncertain quantity as well as quality.

"But," argues the salesman who has not tried this plan, "how can I keep my road work up and show good sales every day, if I visit my trade oftener than their demand for goods requires?"

The answer is: The nature of your accounts and the results at the end of the year, not at the end of the day, is the determining factor in your ultimate success.

By keeping in the closest possible touch with

your trade you are eventually enabled to establish a custom that you can call your own, and your work is accomplished with the minimum amount of effort and expense. But that is not all. Confidence in business is the guiding-star of all satisfactory operation. It is secured mainly by a close relationship between buyer and seller.

Did it ever occur to you how thoroughly you can aid in promoting the interests of your customers, as well as your own, when you have once obtained their confidence to the fullest degree, and that the best possible thing under any circumstances for them is to keep their purchasing eggs as much in one basket as possible, provided the basket is the right one?

Many a small town dealer has allowed his ship of commerce to ground on the shoals of bankruptcy, solely because he purchased from too many houses and could not watch his payments, besides getting more goods on hand than his limited output demanded. All this the clever salesman with singleness of purpose can avert.

I have witnessed the plan of travelling men on limited territories carried out to an eminently successful conclusion in many cases where it was tried. A few years ago my house had but one man covering the State adjoining the one on the east of that in which we were situated — territory that was generally conceded to be in "the enemy's country."

Right here I want to emphasize that that "enemy's country" cry is pretty much a time-worn, punctured theory in the minds of the energetic salesman and the progressive and aggressive house. These assume — and correctly so — that the logical market for any territory, irrespective of distance or position, is the one that can offer the best inducements to draw the patronage of that territory.

Well, Mr. Salesman of the "enemy's country" argued that there was not enough business for a second salesman in his State. He protested against the intrusion with a fervor that would easily have made him top man on the annual sales sheet had this new-found energy been directed on sales-making on his own account in place of arguing against it on the other fellow's. He stoutly maintained that if a division of his territory occurred he could not conduct a profitable business on the section allotted him; that the experiment was bound to be a failure; that the house would regret it, and in the end he would be obliged to take back that portion of his territory given to a new man, and have the up-hill work of regaining the lost prestige that was certain to result from the change.

We were determined to try the experiment, however, and the following year the State was split in halves, the eastern section going to a new man and the western to our old traveller.

Five years later the new man's sales amounted to one hundred thousand dollars a year, against eighty thousand of our former salesman, and yet the latter showed an increase over his previous work and was gaining every year.

Later, precisely the same thing was repeated in two or three other States, with the same results.

In a still more notable instance we had a man travelling on a territory situated far distant from the house. His annual sales amounted to about one hundred and forty thousand dollars, for the greater part of which he received credit on house sales.

The sales manager endeavored to point out to him the superior advantages of his territory, and the results to be obtained by making two trips each season in place of one, as was his custom. Being of that "divine rights" class of men, he was a trifle touchy on the subject of any interference from the house as to the regular routine of his work as he thought it should be conducted. The matter was urged upon him until it got on his nerves, and he became exceedingly uncomfortable, so much so that one day he rushed into the office of the president and flaunted his resignation before him in a tragic manner, loudly protesting against interference with his personal rights. Little did he realize that the man who always thinks of his rights is the first to forget that they involve an equal number of responsibilities.

The reverse of what he expected from his melodramatic effort happened. His resignation was accepted promptly, and just as promptly there commenced a rehabilitation of his former territory. It was divided into three sections and given to three young men in the house anxious to get on the road, and who were charged to the brim with enthusiasm and with ideas instilled into them from headquarters. At the end of the first year their sales in the aggregate amounted to two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Three distinct territories had been established, each covered by a man with fine, growing prospects, and each man working like a Trojan in a spirit of friendly rivalry, the outcome of which could only mean a largely increased business for all concerned.

It is a great thing for a salesman to realize that honest, intelligent effort will bring its reward much more effectually and satisfactorily on a territory that does not encumber him with dead weight on account of its size. Clear your ship for action, and see to it that the barnacles of shortsightedness are cleaned from its bottom.

At the very period in which this chapter was under consideration it was my privilege to form the acquaintance of a gentleman whom I engaged on a commission to assist the committee of which I had the honor to be chairman, in the great public-spirited

movement looking to the commercial and physical advancement of a Greater Chicago.

In the special work upon which we were engaged the services of my new-found acquaintance proved to be invaluable, notwithstanding we were paying him a commission that netted him on an average more than four hundred dollars per month. From boyhood his business career had been decidedly checkered, embracing the promotion of all manner of enterprises, from political campaigns, mining stocks, and expositions, to the management of theatrical companies, and even appearances before the footlights himself as an understudy when occasion demanded.

As a man he was prepossessing in appearance, of pleasing personality, honest, and clean-cut. As a salesman he possessed marked ability and adaptability. He had the best approach and the finest tact, put up the best argument, and closed a deal at the psychological moment, in the neatest manner I have ever witnessed.

In relating to me his experiences one day he said: "I began life without any chance for an education. There was no one to tell me how to begin or what to do to make the most of myself. I know that I am fitted for something better than the work I am doing. I know that I have real ability in my way, but no one has ever told me how to use it to the best permanent

advantage. I'm tired of this changing from one thing to another, even though I manage to derive an income better than the average of men engaged in the work of selling things."

He wound up by adding: "Could n't your firm give me permanent employment on the road? I know I could sell your goods successfully. I have never seen anything that I could n't sell. If you could make room for me I would commence at three thousand a year and take my chances on advancement with something permanent in view."

That is the story of a man who made one hundred thousand dollars, made it honestly, and lost it because of the lack of such discipline as would have taught him to focus his mind on some set plan in his life's work.

It is the story of a man eminently talented, and who might have managed a prosperous enterprise of his own, or at least earned a big salary in an executive position or at the head of a large sales organization but for the fact that he lacked singleness of purpose, oneness in business aspirations, concentration, or whatever you choose to call it that enables a man to stick to a thing until he gets there.

There is another feature in specializing efforts in sales-making that enables the salesman to make a ten-strike, and that is in guiding his customers in

the matter of selection. In order to do that successfully, a careful study must be made of general conditions surrounding the line which he is selling, as well as the requirements of those to whom he wishes to sell.

For instance, some salesmen selling line goods seem to feel that if general conditions are not up to par, there is no chance for immediate sales. Nothing is so far from the facts. This is particularly demonstrated on advance trips where no goods are in immediate demand, and where desire must be created out of whole cloth. I have known bright salesmen to start out with a general line representing their business, only to find a decided apathy on the part of buyers toward their proposition as a whole at that particular time. Did they lie down in despair and write the house that business was dull, it was too early, some one else had been out before them, and a host of other lame excuses?

No! They sharpened their wits, and likewise their selling-talk, took a careful survey of things, and then selected a particularly good value or two in some specific pattern or style from their general line; then they pinned their selling-talk down to that until they aroused interest, created desire, and captured resolve, and at the end of the trip they were more than satisfied with results in the aggregate.

In our line I have known it to be so dull during

a "filling-in" season that there was absolutely no desire on the part of the trade for anything in particular, when some bright salesman in the line-up would single out some one thing that had not been especially strong, from among the hundreds in the various departments, and specialize his efforts on that article in every town on the trip, and thus roll up figures on the monthly sales sheet that were even larger than might have been the case in taking orders more widely distributed under more promising circumstances. The customers, too, were satisfied, because a new idea had been advanced, and they had something new to talk about to their trade.

After all, the average dealer in the rank-and-file town takes his selling-talk pretty much from his favorite salesman. Did you ever think of that?

Salesmanship is a profession, but it is also a game. Every salesman must play it either poorly or well, and always with the same opponent in the game — Time.

Your opponent waits for nothing — relentlessly he watches the game progress. He clutches his scythe, ready to cut you down. All around you and your adversary Time, there is Success. If your mind is distracted from your work, Time gains a vantage-point.

Thousands of salesmen are saying every day.

"If I had my life to live over again I would do thus and so."

The most profitless occupation in the world is to sit idly thinking of what you would do if you had another chance. Forget what is behind. Press forward to the future, which is every man's, to do with as he will!

The game will last as long as you do. Thinking of the foolish plays you have made will not help you to win, unless the experience has taught you how to avoid them and to concentrate your mind on better ones, brushing aside all obstacles. Young salesmen especially need to think much about singleness of purpose, for their temptations are on every hand.

Many young salesmen, and old ones, too, for that matter, act like men lost in the woods, trying to get out without the aid of a compass. They turn to the right and to the left, then go round in a circle, stumbling over logs and entangled underbrush, finally giving up in despair. The road before every salesman is perfectly clear: walk straight ahead to the end of it, and you will come out into the clearing.

Suppose you were to engage a man to bore a well for you. What would you think of him if he bored a few inches here and a few inches there, and kept on boring down just a little way all over a ten-acre field, never going deep enough to strike water?

You would think he ought to have a guardian appointed over him. Well, that is exactly what a great many salesmen are doing. Just boring down through the subsoil, never striking bed-rock and through and beneath it the sparkling water Success.

Try one way, but be sure it 's a good way, and keep at it, Brother Salesman, until you strike the bed-rock of efficient salesmanship.

Don't let your grim old opponent, Father Time, get there ahead of you and block up the way with his impenetrable chain of lost opportunities.

CHAPTER XV

LETTERS TO THE TRADE

The next best thing to interviewing a good customer is to write him a personal letter occasionally.

YOU cannot personally shake hands and jolly up your customers every few days; so the next best thing is to write them personal letters, just as you would talk to them if you were to meet them on the street or in their places of business. Now, is n't that so?

Such letters bring new business and hold old customers.

Naturally, *the more personal talks you can have with your customers, the better; but in between trips write them a heart-to-heart letter now and then,* just to make them feel that you are keeping them in mind. It will show that you have a strong personal interest in them, and the results, if watched, will both please and surprise you. Make your letters talk to your customers. Make them believe in your letters just as you want them to believe in you.

Galileo taught that the earth moves around the sun, but was compelled by the Inquisition to renounce the theory. Perhaps you feel a little that way about what your customers might think of your

letters; that is because you have not discovered the right way to go about it.

Letter-writing, like advertising, is the written method of salesmanship. You can make bad salesmanship of it, the same as of personal interviews, if you do not understand and rightly apply the science.

What would you think of a kid-gloved salesman who approached his customers in the manner that he would approach his hostess at an afternoon reception? Well, that is precisely the way in which more than two-thirds of the business letter-writing is done. Such letters often begin with —

"I beg to acknowledge yours of ——."

"Replying to your esteemed favor of even date, permit me to say ——"

"Your letter of —— is at hand and contents carefully noted."

And they often end with —

"I beg to remain —— "

"I am yours ——"

These shop-worn types of the customary style should have been relegated to the waste-basket a decade ago. Begin your letters in an easy, natural, conversational way. Have something to write about, and think hard about the best way to write it to attract the sympathy of your customer to your proposition.

Be original in your style. Don't write as a

dozen other salesmen that cover your territory are in the habit of doing, in a pointless, stereotyped fashion. Think about your customer; think about what you are going to write, and then write it in a manner that you feel certain will please and interest him.

If you are in the habit of scratching off any old thing the quickest and easiest way, stop to figure out the effect such letters are going to have, if any. Try to realize the great value that it is possible to secure with a little care and study in presenting your subject.

Some salesmen go on the plan that letter-writing is of no avail in helping to increase their sales anyway, and as it is laborious, they let it alone. Ignorance or mental laziness is the foundation of such ideas, aided, perhaps, by a desire to enjoy a game of billiards, or an idle chat with the clerk when the last customer has been called upon and packing is finished. Recreation is necessary and proper, but the salesman in any line who hopes to get on in the world will play only when the last tap of work is finished at the close of each day.

A decade ago commercial letter-writing was deprecated by most business houses as a medium to attract and hold trade. Its use was mainly to cover immediate necessity that could not be adjusted by personal interview. All that has changed with the

changing times, and to-day every business institution of any note has a correspondence department in charge of a high-salaried head, who is especially versed in the art of writing the kind of letters calculated to aid in strengthening its connection with its customers, and to assist its sales force in building new business.

It is as necessary to hold as to build. The salesman who fails to get in touch with the head of the correspondence of his house and seek his aid at times is a poor prop for any house to lean upon.

The most efficient salesman values the backing the house can give him through this department, realizing that his position with his trade is mainly one of aggression, and at times is apt to be misconstrued, no matter how securely he may be intrenched in the confidence of his customers.

A general promotion letter now and then to his trade, bearing the authority of his house, stamps the salesman's efforts, methods, and assertions with added power of persuasion.

While a sincere letter of appreciation of favors received, eliminating entirely any flavor of bid for business, at the end of each season, promotes a feeling of good will conducive to the interests of all concerned, and effectually paves the way for stronger and better trade relations.

Although salesmen of more than ordinary suc-

sess are to be found in many houses, who put their hands up in a know-it-all, self-satisfied sort of way, deprecating support of this kind as unnecessary, if not actually interfering with what they term "their interests," yet he is a wise salesman who encourages it and seeks every opportunity to make free use of it.

The best managed house in the world makes mistakes at times, and mistakes make disgruntled customers. Something goes wrong in the billing department; a piece of goods fails to come up to par; a certain pattern, through the fault of no one, does not turn out exactly as represented; a customer in the house is not given the attention he thinks he should receive; in fact, a dozen things of similar nature are liable to occur in the best regulated establishments, which tend to disquiet this or that customer for the time being. Do what you can to straighten out the kinks, and make sure that there remains no cause of complaint in which your customer may find a reasonable pretext for giving business to a competitor that otherwise might have gone to you. Tell the correspondence man about it; that 's what he is there for.

It 's your business to sell goods, and you are supposed to know your business. You 'd get mad if some one told you you didn't know it, wouldn't you? Well, then, leave the matter of "fixing" the custom-

ers in the hands of the man whose business it is to look after that part of the work. Put the same degree of confidence in him that you demand and expect to receive yourself, and see how quickly and nicely all these things will be adjusted.

"But," says Mr. Salesman of inquiring mind, "if I tell my troubles to the house I may get a letter telling me that the house has troubles of its own, and that I am paid to fix these things for myself."

Do all you can for yourself in fixing the business of your house, no matter how you may be called upon, but when all is said and done to the best of your ability, seek help from headquarters. If your house has a manager that would send you that kind of a reply, and you do not get the sort of help you require, the best thing for that house is to discharge him and get a manager who understands that a fine piece of machinery needs oiling to make it run without friction.

Not only energy is needed in salesmanship, but method, system, and a readiness to adapt oneself to the conditions required to accomplish results. There are many salesmen eager to sell a bill of goods, but careless about other things pertaining to the fulfilment of the contract to the minutest detail. There are many who seem to think that if they have made a customer, it is immaterial whether they keep him or not.

The business letter of the average salesman is of a very low standard — has little if any pulling power. It is meaningless, because it contains nothing of personal interest to the recipient. If you write every customer in exactly the same way and as you have been writing all your life, it is no wonder that you do not believe in letter-writing.

He who rests at the foot of the mountain knows of the glories of yonder peak only from other travellers who have completed the arduous journey.

There is a certain style in drawing up a letter on any question so as to make it produce desired results. The key to the mastery of this style is of so great value as to make it worth months of effort and hundreds of dollars to any salesman to discover it. It is not undiscoverable, by any means.

To begin with, *don't put too much of yourself into your letters.* The best customer on your calendar is not interested overmuch in you. The thing that concerns him is how you can help his situation. Don't fool yourself into believing that you have him solidly bound to you by close ties of friendship. Intimate acquaintance is worth much, to be sure, but your own brother will patronize you in a business way only so long as you can make it worth his while from a dollar-and-cent standpoint. That is because business is business. Friendship is another matter. It is useful only as a path-opener in business. It

will keep the opening clear only as long as it conduces to your customer's commercial prosperity.

But to return. In letter-writing keep yourself in the background, *put your customer's interests to the fore*, and avoid construction of the machine-like, ready-made order. Introduce your subject in a graceful, natural, and friendly style; then, carefully avoiding meaningless sentences, proceed into the real pith of your proposition, making your points tell one on another, briefly, vividly, connectedly, down to the leave-taking, which should be genuinely polite, but withal natural and pleasant, as you would say good-bye to a friend or acquaintance about to depart on a short journey.

You would n't greet an old acquaintance on the street with, "Excuse me for taking this liberty in saying how do you do," or "The favor of your presence here on the street with me is heartily appreciated, I assure you." And you would n't leave him with, "I hope you will remember me. Good-bye," or, "I hope I have pleased you in this meeting, and that you will offer me further opportunity for continued acquaintance."

Sounds funny, does n't it?

Well, that 's the way it sounds when you write letters that way. If you would n't talk that way to your friends, why do you write in that style? Think it over.

You don't do it? Oh, yes, you do! And you are not alone in it either.

Bring your customer as close to you in a letter as you would in a personal talk, if he were sitting at your elbow in the sample-room or talking to you at his own desk.

Men of limited schooling have found an easy method of increasing their vocabulary in reading extensively and studiously from the lives of great men, and other works of educational interest. In precisely the same way the salesman may increase his knowledge of correct letter-writing by making a careful study of the style adopted by men who are specialists in the art of business-letter writing.

Take pains with your letters. When one is finished in which you wish your powers of persuasion to have full swing, read it over carefully; study the weak points, and try again. Keep on trying until you hit upon a style that you feel certain will have the desired effect.

I have known men who, from long practice, were skilled in the art of constructing powerful business-getting letters, to ponder for hours and destroy many copies in an effort at shaping up just what they wanted for a strong letter with which to fit a specific purpose.

The power of business-letter writing as a silent

factor in salesmanship is second only to the oral method.

To any salesman who will intelligently explore the field there awaits a golden harvest. Begin now while the subject is fresh in your mind. In place of using the conventional advance cards, that outlived their usefulness before their invention, invest a dollar or two occasionally in the services of a public stenographer, and keep your customers in touch with you by heart-to-heart, elbow-to-elbow business-getting and business-holding letters.

It will please and surprise you amazingly to see how quickly and effectually your work will take on new life. All that is necessary to germinate it is a little time employed from among the many idle hours on board the train or about hotel lobbies, coupled with the slight investment of a few cents, and a larger one of sense.

CHAPTER XVI

GETTING THE PRICE

The highest delights are often found by turning the back on inviting by-paths and facing cold duty.

IT is hard to redeem the salesman who is under the narcotic of price-cutting.

The habit of making your own prices on your employer's goods is a moral kink in your selling education, a holdback on your advancement in the profession, and a sink-hole for the profits of your house; and if you cannot break yourself of it, better far that you quit salesmanship and become an auctioneer; then you can have unlimited latitude to indulge in the pastime of tobogganing on a sliding scale of price-making where no harm can be done.

The most inexcusable fault in any salesman is the lack of ability to get the price.

If you will *always keep in mind the principle of not allowing your customers to make your price*, you will find how easy it is to make sales at the prices with which your goods are marked.

There are shrewd buyers everywhere who have learned that if they can put the price on the other man's goods they are morally certain of getting the best end of the bargain.

When a customer enters your sample-room and

informs you that your competitor has offered him the same article you have just shown him at a lower price than you named, you should at once settle it with yourself that you will be establishing a dangerous precedent in falling into the hands of that customer, if this reported cut in price is met without careful investigation. And even then you should generally stand firm and refuse to meet this competitive attack. The salesman who sells the right goods to his customers in the right way has no need to do business at a loss on any article, or to allow his competitors or his customers to make his prices.

It is a good thing to remember the old rule that a good buyer never calls attention to the fact of prices being higher in one place than another. If a higher price has actually been named than he could buy the same article for elsewhere, he quietly drops it, slips away to the store of the man who made the lower price, and places his order there.

In nine cases out of ten, when a buyer questions your prices he is merely testing your nerve as a salesman. If you should yield just once, and your house be lax enough to permit it, you are done for on price-getting with that buyer as long as you travel that territory.

The weak-kneed salesman who is unacquainted with the mind of the average buyer imagines because he is not strong himself on his own goods and prices,

that the buyers on his territory will share his uncertainty. If they do share it, it is because of his reflected weakness, and not on account of his values.

All through the various phases of salesmanship, faith runs like a silver thread. If a salesman's faith is weakened with dread and doubt, he must blame his failure on his lack of confidence, and not on his goods.

When you start out with a new line of goods at the beginning of a season, and your faith is abundant, how easy it is for you to drive your points home and clinch your arguments with every article shown. No room for price-cutting then!

Now, as a matter of fact, the prices of the goods in your house are pretty generally right. An off price now and then, even on a marked article, is perfectly liable to occur, but it is nothing to be alarmed at. Your house could not remain in business and pay you the salary you are drawing, if it were always under the market on everything it had to sell.

While you are looking with an eye to picking the easy sellers in your line, don't forget that price in merchandising does not cut so much figure as it did ten years ago. The buyer's argument then was price and quantity; now it is selection and quality. The merchant is out of date who goes about the market wearing that old price bugaboo around his neck. There is little room for doubt that his shelves

are filled with shop-worn "bargains," in place of up-to-date merchandise.

On a certain occasion a big and pompous dealer from the West came into our store, and in a loud voice said:

"I 'm looking for the man who makes prices."

The sales manager was called, and explained to him that no one in the place was empowered with that privilege. "Our prices," said he, "are the same to you as to others."

"But," answered the merchant, "I have always heard it stated that you were high-priced."

"You are willing to trust to your own knowledge of values, are you not?" asked the manager.

He said he was, and expressed a desire to go through the house. Stopping on one of the floors where he thought it would be a good place for the merchant to start in to buy, the manager launched into a brief, terse argument, in which he cut loose from cheapness,— emphasizing merit,— laying stress on inherent worth both of style and quality.

That buyer placed an order for fifteen hundred dollars before he left, and came back for more goods each season afterwards, always acknowledging that that argument on quality had been worth a great deal to him in his own business.

I have known salesmen to be so weak on price that, when they discovered an article in the line that

was overvalued, from among hundreds of others of exceptional value, all they could do was to go about the place and hound everybody they came in contact with about it, as if the whole future of the house and themselves depended on immediate adjustment of the matter. Their argument was that if a customer should happen to run across it, it would prejudice him toward the entire line. Nice compliment to their customers' knowledge of values, was n't it?

For the edification of just such salesmen, let me emphasize right here that *buyers do not turn down a house of standing because of a price or two being out of the way.* Every buyer has certain houses on his staff that he likes to favor. Before going to market he makes a mental blue-print of the amount of goods he intends to purchase, and about how much he will leave with each house. In visiting the various places he is in the habit of frequenting, his chief attention is given to selection on style — not price. He picks out patterns in one house that he did not see in another, and *vice versa.* If, perchance, he actually discovers the same article in two places at different prices, and he has already purchased it at the higher price, he simply cancels his order for that one thing and places it with the other house. But on no account does he condemn the entire plant because of that experience. So there is no

need of fear that your trade is going to leave you on any such pretext.

Enlargement of the heart is responsible for price-cutting on the part of some salesmen. They permit a buyer to work on their sympathies with stories of the quantity of goods he can use if the price is right. He pleads his case so eloquently and with such ardor that the salesman forgets that successful salesmanship depends upon his ability to lead his customers — not on following them. *Leaders are finders; followers get but leavings.*

"Clouds are helped by winds to rise. Be not a cloud; strive to be the wind whose will the clouds obey."

The spirit of accommodation is all right in its place, but it amounts to an offence against your house when you take the liberty of displaying it at the firm's expense. It is easy to be generous with other people's resources, unless your character is free from kinks. Price-cutting is character weakness. Did you ever think of it in that light?

What right have you to reduce the price of another's goods purely of your own volition?

No more right than you have to go behind the cashier's desk, put your hand in the money-drawer, and take out the same amount you lop off in a cut price and give to a customer.

Sounds severe, does it not? It is the truth.

Truth hurts sometimes, but when it hurts most it does the most good.

You are paid to sell goods at a profit.

The Sheldon definition of salesmanship is the best I have ever heard —

"Power to persuade people to purchase at a profit."

Not simply to purchase, but to purchase at a profit.

Your salary is based upon a percentage of your sales, plus travelling expense. When you cut prices, this percentage does not fluctuate with your cuts. It goes on just the same whether you are steady on prices or not. The basis of profit to you remains the same. If your house fixes the percentage on the profits of your sales instead of the actual sales, that is a different proposition. That is the safest and surest remedy for price-cutting; it makes the fiddler dance to his own music.

The house employing many salesmen without a profit-figuring department is like a steam boiler without a safety-valve.

Strange as it may seem, salesmen who have enjoyed the widest liberty in the conduct of their firm's affairs abroad, and whose basis for salary has been changed from net sales to profit on sales, decidedly prefer the latter method. It leaves no

gaps in the selling-fence through which the salesman is tempted to wander into by-paths. It is always easier to keep your mind on one object than on a dozen. When that object is the sale of goods at a profit, it is easier of accomplishment with the course positively defined. The man is yet undiscovered who can successfully watch all the attractions going on at once in a five-ring circus.

If, however, your house is still operating on the old plan of percentage on sales, and there is no limit to your latitude (don't put the coat on, now, unless it fits; this chapter is intended for that class of salesmen for whom instructions have but little restraining influence), stop for a moment to consider your house. It pays you your salary. It is the head of the business family of which you are a member. True, you could go elsewhere and secure a position — almost any one could. That is the meanest argument you could use. The question is, Have you no filial business regard for the head of your business family?

Why, of course! Down in the inner recesses of your sterner nature you know you have, only you have not stopped to think of it in that light. Show it, then, by quitting the price-cutting habit.

You would not lift your hand against the safety and maintenance of your own father's household, would you? Why do you do it, then, against

the home of your business family? When you compare the two cases there is not much difference.

You have some pride, have you not? Well, then, if you don't want to be known to the father and brothers of your business family as a weakling, constantly requiring care and watching, quit that habit of price-cutting. Start in to hold up your end in supporting that family, in place of being a drag on it.

Every time that you take a liberty that you have no business to take, some one suffers for it. When you fail to do your part in keeping up the profits of your house, your brother salesmen have to carry the load you have imposed upon them by your lack of sense of obligation.

The most justifiable kick any salesman ever makes is when another salesman in his house cuts the price, while he remains firm. If you want the privilege of being a "special rights" member of the family, you ought to be willing to pay for it.

My first business venture was the establishment of a house that travelled ten men. Our capital was limited, and we could not afford to make many mistakes. But in our desire to get a foothold, we allowed our salesmen a considerable degree of latitude the first two or three years. Finally we were obliged to call a halt. The cutting of prices was ruining our business. We took the men aside

one day and explained matters, asking their support in refusing to cut prices any longer. Our best men stopped the practice at once, but there were three or four weaklings on the staff, who thought the request was a joke, and to correct these it became necessary to make a positive rule that all salesmen cutting prices would be charged with the difference.

The rule worked splendidly, and our sales increased. All but one man fell into line. He was the tail-ender on the force, and a little, nervous, over-anxious fellow, as methodical as an eight-day clock about everything except getting the price. That worried him. He had an enormous bump of conceit that prevented anything from penetrating to his gray matter that was not conceived by himself.

Two days after the new rule went into effect he sent an order in with several cut prices. On the face of it, there was no earthly reason for his action, as the quantities were all small and the prices shaved just a little all down the line. These cuts amounted to eight dollars in all. We immediately authorized the cashier to debit his personal account with that amount and to deduct it from his next pay-check.

When our star cutter received his check minus the eight dollars, he got very mad and came in from a near-by town to tell us so. As soon as he arrived we told him to save his breath; that we knew

what he had come in to tell us; that our profits were involved, not his, and we would do the talking.

In language that he managed to comprehend at last, he was informed that the rule would stand — the eight dollars that he had taken from us and donated to his customer would not be refunded; that we would add to it the amount of his railroad fare from the town he had run in from and back to the next one; that he would be docked for the time lost while in the house and *en route;* that it was costing him money every minute he remained; and if there was any doubt left in his mind that we meant business, and he still wanted to deliver himself of that kick he had brought in with him, that we would accept his resignation then and there and put a man in his place from among the dozen young fellows in the store who were waiting and anxious to fill it, and who would obey instructions.

That settled it with him. He turned red in the face, a lump came up in his throat, he swallowed it along with his conceit and with whatever it was he had come in to tell us, reached for his hat, picked up his grip, set it down, and extended his hand, simply saying, "Thank you. I can get the price," and was gone. We never had any more trouble with him, and he did not lose his trade either.

Honestly made merchandise that is not out of date is equivalent in value to gold. Who ever heard

of a man selling a five-dollar gold piece for four dollars and ninety-five cents? Is there any reasonable excuse why a salesman should sell a piece of cloth — regular goods, up-to-date, and worth a dollar — for ninety-five cents? Certainly not from the two common causes that lead to price-cutting — fear that a customer will think you are robbing him, and the fact that your customer has more staying qualities than you have, when he talks you into giving him a lower price than that marked on your goods.

From actual experience, covering many years as salesman, as buyer, and as manager of salesmen, I am prepared to say that ninety per cent of the cases where price-cutting is indulged in are due to one or the other of the causes mentioned above.

Almost without exception, in every case where the salesman weakens on prices, the desire to cut to meet a combined attack from competitor and customer results from his ignorance of values. *Know your goods; know that the price is right; know that your goods are good goods and will sell; know that you can sell them,— and you will never dream of price-cutting.* A dollar's worth for a dollar is all that any reasonable-minded dealer has any right to expect, or that any honest wholesaler or manufacturer has any right to give.

Every time that a manufacturer, wholesaler, or salesman, knowingly or otherwise, undersells a com-

petitor or cuts to meet him in price, he either establishes or aids and abets a practice that is widespread in its destructiveness to commercial interests in general. Such methods are at once illegitimate and unbusiness-like, and therefore unqualifiedly wrong.

"That's queer," chorus the salesman and wholesaler of little principle and less backbone. "Can't a man do with his goods what he pleases?"

Legally, yes. Morally, no.

No man has any moral right to undermine the work of others all around him who are honestly engaged in their efforts to become successful. The quicker the price-cutting salesman is forced out of the profession, the better. If it is his house that is guilty, the sooner it fails and goes into bankruptcy, the better for the common good of others engaged in its line.

At the time our new rules went into effect with our salesmen, we also abolished the two-price system which had been in vogue in our store since its inception. Our men loudly proclaimed that the "short-price" customers would never stand for it, and that we should lose a large percentage of our big accounts. I do not now recall that we lost a single customer.

Our line being a seasonable one, we paid a little closer attention to the buying end of the business, and we found our customers ready to pay our price for merchandise that was in demand; the kind that was not, they would not take at any price.

I took a short trip into the West in the interests of certain large accounts. The line I took along was exclusively from our manufacturing department. This line we sold both to jobber and retailer. We had placed it that season with a number of large jobbers in our own territory, whose competition we were obliged to meet on our own goods sold through our own jobbing department.

Naturally, the matter of fixing the price was an interesting one with us, having, as stated, abolished the two-price system, while the jobbers to whom we had sold were still using it. The situation was perplexing, but we were determined to act on the principle we had laid down, and so we marked the line at a fair and reasonable profit without concern as to what others were doing with it.

This was an unusual instance, and I am relating it solely for the purpose of illustrating how utterly groundless are the salesman's fears, who attempts to prognosticate the attitude his customers may take toward his house in case it is discovered that he overcharged them.

But to return to that Western trip. An old customer and personal friend, who conducted an extensive business in one of the cities visited, took a decided fancy to the line. He was a good buyer, was very direct, said but little, and required no urging.

After thoroughly looking the line over, he

selected twenty or thirty numbers in good quantities without question as to prices.

There was one pattern, however, that came in several styles that attracted his attention, but he could not seem to decide upon it. When we had gone through the entire line he returned to that pattern, examining very attentively the various styles, the meanwhile revolving something in his mind that was slow in coming out.

Venturing to help him, I remarked, "That pattern seems to interest you."

"Yes, I like it," he answered, "but at the price, eighteen dollars per dozen, I can't use it. The pattern suits me, and I would give you an order for several dozen at sixteen fifty, which would enable me to put it out at a certain price I was figuring on, but I don't want to make a price on your goods."

I chaffered with him a little to no purpose, finally making the concession. I figured out that no harm could come of it, as he was our only customer there; besides, I wanted to please him, as he had given me an exceptionally good order, and sixteen dollars and fifty cents was all that I would have asked of him under our former two-price system.

Ah! but those are not the real reasons why I came down on the price. I might as well own up that I was afraid some one of those other houses carrying our line would come along and quote him

a short price on that number, placing me in an embarrassing position that would be difficult to explain, especially as I knew that two houses were selling him more goods than we were, who had the line from us that season.

When I returned home and related my experience to our manufacturer, he laughed so long and loud that it made me angry, and I asked him what there was funny about it.

"Funny? Ha! ha!" he exclaimed, "it's the funniest thing I ever heard of. Here you've been conjuring up in your mind what our competitors would do to you on the price of that pattern, and it's the only dead thing in the line. We positively haven't placed a dozen of it with any jobber on our books."

It did look funny, and I laughed too, but that cured me of worrying about my competitors' prices.

Work hard, intelligently, and perseveringly on your line of goods. Never fear competition; do not see it, hear it, or feel it — that is the way to make competition fear you. Too much time is lost in watching for possible evil to ourselves resulting from another's methods. Let the other fellow lose it.

Competition is like the weather: it is different on different days, but it is always with us. The man who fears the weather is sure to catch cold.

CHAPTER XVII

DRESS AND ORDERLINESS

Pay attention to your clothes, and others will pay attention to you.

Orderliness in salesmanship is the science made more perfect.

GOOD clothes help to make a salesman. Observers are more impressed by the tidiness of one's clothing than by its expensiveness or variety.

It is said that no one ever notices a man's linen, unless it is soiled; or his hat, unless it is of unusual shape, or dusty, or shabby; or his shoes, unless they are loud, or need blacking, or are worn down at the heel.

True, unpleasant conditions do attract notice, but it is undeniable that the observer is always agreeably impressed by the cleanliness and good style which distinguish the gentleman. *Every salesman, therefore, owes it to himself and to his house to be well dressed.*

The secret lies more in the choice of clothes and the way they are taken care of than in their expensiveness or variety. Often the man with a modest wardrobe is better dressed than the one with many suits. Naturally, the man is light-headed, not to say wicked, who would squander on coats, boots, and neckties an

income sufficient to support several families; but the example of the careless, slovenly man is not inviting, and if extravagance is to be deplored, there is merit in good dressing. Strike the happy medium. Be neither a Beau Brummell nor a dust-stained Weary Willie.

Neglect of the clothing is a symptom of slovenliness that is apt to be progressive.

The well-dressed salesman is scrupulously neat, carries himself well, and is alert and active. The salesman who is content with ill-fitting clothes, shabby hat, soiled linen, rusty shoes, and a collar that is a size too large may be a very bright man and representing a first-class house, but he certainly does not look that way. The first impression the observer forms of him is that he is a "down-and-outer," bordering on a state of collapse. So much depends on first impressions and in keeping up good impressions once formed, that every salesman should regard his personal appearance as important.

Contempt for clothes is too often associated with laziness. The salesmen whom the general trade care to meet are those who "keep up" in every way. In matters like dress, it is a good thing for the salesman to try to get a look at himself "as others see him."

It matters little what your income is or the claims there may be upon it, you can at least afford to patronize a tailor who can give your clothes a

stylish cut and a neat fit. Properly selected and adjusted fifty-cent neckties look as good as dollar ones; and a hat that becomes you costs no more than a misfit.

Personal appearance in salesmanship counts so much and costs so little, that any salesman can afford the price, and it is money well invested. A man is judged almost as much by his appearance as by his actions or the degree of his sanity in this progressive age. A well-dressed, alert salesman will get a "look in" with a brusque merchant, while his slovenly brother is being waved aside with the busy signal.

Orderliness in dress goes hand in hand with orderliness in the sample-room and orderliness in everything else connected with the work of a salesman. *Nothing creates in the buyer a desire to buy like stepping into a well-ordered salesroom.* The most attractive line of goods will lose out fifty per cent through ineffective display in a cluttered-up room.

The proper display of samples on the road is a subject worthy of the closest study. Due care should also be given to cleaning up the sample-room in general before going out to round up a customer. Waste paper, trays, and empty boxes should be stowed away out of sight, and everything arranged in apple-pie order, if one hopes to conduct a customer through the line without a hitch.

Some salesmen are naturally orderly; others learn to be, by hard knocks taught in the school of experience; and still another class never learn the lesson. I graduated from the second class during my first year on the road. It happened in this way.

My line was displayed in a large, hustling, northern Michigan town. Our house had practically no business there, and my first three visits were devoted largely to an effort to interest the largest concern in the place; but I failed.

On my fourth trip I found the buyer of my line away on sick leave. The head of the house was a crusty, nervous old man; but not wishing to be turned down altogether, I summoned courage enough to approach him.

In place of the curt refusal I expected to receive, to my surprise he asked in a quick, sharp manner if I would be in my room at the hotel at twelve o'clock. Receiving a reply in the affirmative, he promised to meet me there at that hour. With eager expectancy I went back to wait out the interval. I was nervous and dreaded his coming, for that was my first experience face to face with a big merchant.

He was on time to the second. With youthful indiscretion I greeted him rather more effusively than the occasion required, which he failed to notice, however, for he pushed right by me into the room without any ceremony whatever. Before I had recovered my

mental equilibrium, he was firing questions at me, two at a time, concerning the value of various items in the line. Without giving me time to answer even his first inquiry, he started for the door, with the remark that he guessed there was n't anything he wanted. Stopping on the threshold, he turned and said, "If you have a black silk at ——, I can use a few pieces."

"Certainly," I said, "I 'm sure we have it," and commenced a search that ended in despair. The piece-goods samples were jumbled in a telescope with two or three other lines, and in spite of desperate efforts to locate that silk sample I couldn't put my hand on the right one, although I knew it was there.

He got impatient, and I got nervous, which gave me blind staggers, and I couldn't have found that sample if it had stood in front of me as large as the statue of Liberty. Muttering something about "disorderly salesmen," he rushed out, banging the door behind him. I dropped into a convenient chair in a cold sweat. Ten minutes later I located the offending sample and started to run over to his store with it, when it struck me that he was probably at luncheon. At one-thirty I found him in his office and hastened to apologize for the delay.

"Never mind troubling yourself, young man," he said, in a rasping tone, "I have just placed an

order for twenty pieces of the silk I wanted with a New York salesman who keeps his samples where he can find them." And then to give good measure, he added, "If you remain on the road and expect to succeed, you 'll have to keep your wits about you."

The loss of that order amounted to four hundred dollars, besides a chance to get an opening-wedge in with a gilt-edge concern. I did n't need any coaching after that, on how to keep stock in the sample-room.

Proper care of samples is as necessary as effective display or orderly arrangement.

The three vital factors in the successful sale of goods from samples are: first, the standing of your house; second, your own power of persuasion; third, the condition of your samples.

The most painstaking salesman will find that with packing and unpacking his trunks every day, his samples soon become worn and unattractive. What then happens to the careless man? Many a time I have seen a line of what had once been choice goods in an utterly shabby condition before they had been out ten days, and for the balance of a trip of several weeks the salesman carrying them was obliged to make the best showing he could with ruined samples.

It is a difficult matter, even for a buyer possess-

ing the keenest imagination, to stretch his fancy from a straw-hat sample that looks like a punctured bushel basket to the smart article of headgear it was when it came fresh from the factory.

When a clothing salesman extracts from a pile a garment that resembles a linen duster instead of the snappy, up-to-date coat that it once was, his customer is very likely to class it with the "has-beens" and ask to be shown something in the prevailing style.

A good-looking sample is a sale half made.

When I was in the jobbing business at D——, a prominent straw-goods manufacturer called on us, accompanied by his regular salesman.

The occasion of his visit was to introduce a new line. He succeeded in arousing the interest of our hat-buyer, who induced me to go along with him to the manufacturer's sample-room to look his line over. Picking up a certain block that he thought was destined to have a great run, the manufacturer started to show forth its merits. Stopping suddenly, his eyes riveted on a certain spot on that hat, he called his salesman over to our group, and there in front of us all gave the unlucky fellow the worst "roasting" I ever heard.

"Do you see that dent in the crown of this hat?" he asked.

It was so small that the rest of us had failed to notice it; but his salesman admitted it was there.

"Well," continued the manufacturer, "have n't I told you repeatedly to pack your samples so as to insure them against damage? In another two weeks this sample will be utterly worthless. Do you expect to finish your trip introducing this hat, and to take orders from it in a dilapidated state?"

The manufacturer worked himself up to a great state, while his salesman stood before him, utterly unable to defend himself. Although he was guilty of carelessness, he was too manly to offer excuses, so said nothing.

"Perhaps you know where another line is coming from; I don't," his employer started in again. "I tell you what it is, I want you to take more care with these samples. If it takes all day to pack up, you see to it after this that they are packed to avoid breaking."

The salesman was saved from further reprimand by a telephone call from the office. When he had left the room I asked his employer if he was n't a little rough on him, and whether such talks were not more effectively conducted in private.

"Perhaps so. No doubt you are right," he answered in a half-apologetic manner, "but it is so exasperating. I lost my self-control for the moment. Permit me to explain, however, what my salesman knew from long experience, that a new line of samples like these is made ready only after weeks of work

and great expense. Our sample line is our stock in trade until the orders are all in and the factory running. A duplicate line could not be had, excepting at great cost and a loss of time. In any event, there is really very little excuse for careless packing. A damaged sample is a poor foundation argument upon which to build a satisfactory business in a new line."

Barring the unpleasantness of the sample-room incident, that talk impressed me so, that, immediately on returning to my office, I caused to be sent out to our own travelling men a detailed account of what had taken place.

A salesman's duty to his house does not consist alone in reaching a satisfactory figure in volume of sales. Other things require his attention to complete his real worth. Profit, not sales, is the objective point of every house. Chasing sales instead of profits is a disastrous game for either salesman or employer. Wanton extravagance in expense, loss from damage on samples, returned goods, and claims of whatsoever nature, resulting from loose methods in making sales, are all profit-drainers. If you wish your sales to increase, and if you have an honest interest in seeing your house make profits, see to it that your sample-line is kept in the best possible condition.

Again: orderliness plays an important part in

the clerical work every salesman is obliged to do each day. Your bad penmanship may be pardoned if you have not had the advantages of thorough training, but there can be no possible excuse for you if your orders are so carelessly transcribed as to be incomprehensible.

We had in our employ a man of exceptional ability as a salesman; but in spite of his superior attainments in other respects, it seemed impossible for him to transcribe an order properly. The habit of carelessness had such a hold upon him that, in spite of the repeated efforts of the head of the house and others, down to the order clerk, he could not be made to reform. He would invariably omit the name of the town, or the customer's name, or neglect to state departments, so that the office was in a constant turmoil when filling his orders. He was great on abbreviating. He would so abbreviate words that only he and a mind-reader could have deciphered them. We never could get him into the habit of being orderly about these things.

Don't let the habit of disorderliness grow upon you if you want to be a help instead of a nuisance to the order-filling department, where so much depends upon quick service. *Be particular also to see to it that your manager is kept in constant touch with your movements on the road.* At times it means

much to any business to be able to reach a salesman within a few hours by wire.

Some men travel their itinerary with the precision of an advance agent for a theatrical company. The office can put its finger on them any time, anywhere around the circuit, almost on the instant. And their return home occurs on the very day and hour of their original schedule left in the office on their departure. Others leave behind a carefully prepared route list, and from the moment their backs are turned on headquarters, they proceed to hop, skip, and jump erratically over their territory. They are never to be located, and seldom return within three or four days of scheduled time. When they do come in, it is ten to one that a bee-line is made for the manager's office, where they begin to kick about being "neglected" on new samples and other current matter such as was sent out to the men every few days.

Keep in touch with the office if you want the office to keep in touch with you.

Be orderly about everything pertaining to your work, and your interests and the interests of your house will move forward with clock-like precision, bringing satisfaction of a triple alliance nature to customers, house, and salesman.

CHAPTER XVIII

RETAIL SALESMEN

Less working at it, and more thought about it, would help many salesmen behind the counter to rise above the dead level.

Sunshiny salesmanship softens the frostiest buyer.

"NOT yet, but soon"—the "near-salesman's" motto—explains the reason why more salesmen measuring calico at eight dollars a week are not earning eighteen hundred dollars a year or more, at the silk or dress-goods counter. Yet there is room for real salesmanship even behind the calico counter, and the essentials are the same there as anywhere else.

It is an honorable occupation, to be sure; but when a young salesman is content to remain at it longer than a year, his gumption is several degrees below ambition. If he cannot in some manner raise it up a few degrees at a time, until it reaches an ordinary man's thinking and working capacity, he will be rooted there for the remainder of his days.

Many retail salesmen drudge along, satisfied with a mere treadmill existence. "Oh, what's the use?" they argue, "there's no chance in a retail store, anyway."

If there is no chance for you where you are, it

is a dead certainty that you are not suited for the work you are doing, and the sooner you get out and give some one else a chance, the sooner will you be giving both yourself and your employer a square deal. As a rule, the salesman's position behind the counter is a pretty fair measure of his capabilities.

Some salesmen have the capacity to draw molasses from the bung-hole in a barrel without smearing it over the measure and on the floor; they can weigh out a dollar's worth of sugar, and do it so well that the balance is a hair's weight in favor of the customer; but if they were put in charge of the general order-filling department, with several salesmen under them, they would fizzle out completely. They have not the breadth of mind to grasp the requirements of a large position, and they attempt to apply their small conception of trotting from the molasses-barrel to the sugar-box to the more important matter of mastering many details. It can't be done; and naturally they fail.

As the retail salesman broadens his position, he assumes new responsibilities, and he must change his viewpoint to fit the expanding scope of his greater undertaking. Floaters, life-buoys, and danger-ropes are all right for timid surf-bathers, but to swim out into broad, deep water requires physical courage and well-seasoned powers of endurance. Inability

to leave the shore line marks the man who would better stay in close to shore, where little boats are safe.

There is, oh, so much for a salesman to be, to do, to get, to earn, to try, in every retail establishment, that there is little excuse and less hope for the man who says there is no chance.

I have no desire in my heart to say one thing derogatory to your position, no matter how humble it may be.

The man whom I am after, whether he is at the five-cent counter or taking orders that run up into the hundreds, is that self-important, small-calibre "near-salesman" who so thoroughly neglects his customers that they grow chilly in his presence, even though the day is hot. Few retail shoppers escape frequent experiences of that kind, and it is safe to say that no one ever becomes a better customer of the house where salespeople of that stamp are tolerated. The house may be a good one, but one goes away feeling that they do not appreciate his trade.

Now, if you "near-salesmen" don't like what I am writing about you and to you, don't look at me. Get your eyes open so that you can see yourself,—that is the first sight to look at.

What are you cutting up about? Putting on airs with a twelve-dollar-a-week position! That's what every one who patronizes your counter is trying to figure out.

Your house does not pay you to strut around like a farm-yard bantam rooster. All that your customers want from you, and have a right to expect, is courteous, business-like attention, without frills of any kind.

I want to get you mad. That 's why I 'm using unceremonious language in developing your picture. When a man gets good and angry because some one has told him the truth about himself, he can generally be depended upon to go out and "clean up" in a thorough, wholesome manner. If he makes a good job of it, it won't be long before you hear of him doing something of real account.

I never saw an uppish salesman in my life in whose salesmanship I had any confidence. A "smart" salesman is a man whom no one cares to have much to do with.

When a man becomes inoculated with the germs of true salesmanship, he gets it in his blood, muscles, head, and soul, all over from head to foot, and it makes a sensible, industrious man of him.

Carry a smile through your work. Whenever a salesman cannot be sunshiny with his customers he is in need of a liver tonic.

"Blessed is he who, having found his own work, clutches it, clings to it, directly, consecutively, and always."

Therein lies the secret of accomplishment.

When a salesman has little or no conception of the obligations his position imposes upon him, to say nothing of lack of desire for advancement, then it is that soft platitudes and high-sounding phrases are of no avail.

This book is for negative salesmen, not positive ones. The man who is surrounded and choked up with weeds of indolence, neglect, and carelessness is the one I want to reach.

Pulling weeds loosens the roots and injures the growing plant for the moment; but soon it lifts its head and takes on new growth in the free soil, becoming sturdy and eventually fruitful instead of a weak, withered, inanimate thing almost crushed out by the weeds that were gradually sapping its life.

The safest and surest way for the retail salesman to advance from a lowly position to a better one is by performing his daily work in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. His present surroundings may not be congenial, but all that can be changed if he will set his mind on something better and strive hard to reach it. Wishing will not do it. He must work and be patient.

Begin by being polite and obliging to every customer that visits your counter, whether you think there is a chance for a sale or not. Make it plain that it is not only no trouble for you to show goods,

but a pleasure. Make your customers feel at home with you on the instant by an immediate willingness to serve them intelligently. Create desire by making tactful, helpful suggestions.

There is considerable difference between the salesman that attempts to force facts down the buyer's throat and the one that offers information in reasonable, smooth, and pleasing doses. Do not thrust your ideas upon your customers, but in an easy, natural, and pleasing way attract their sympathy and secure their confidence. You will then experience little trouble in making sales, even where desire is totally lacking, as indicated on the surface.

Get over the idea that where there is no desire there is no chance to make a sale, and that almost every one entering a retail store has his mind fully made up on what he intends to purchase. Nothing could be farther from the real facts. *The average shopper is glad to have suggestions when he knows they are honestly and intelligently given. But the whole matter rests on confidence.* You can do nothing to aid a customer in making selections until you have first secured his good-will by that indefinable something in your manner that leads him to believe that you are to be trusted, and that you really wish to be of service to him.

It is important also that you do not fool yourself into believing that your employers are unmind-

ful of your presence in their establishment, and that whether you are serving them ill or well makes no difference, because either way it escapes their notice.

That mistaken idea is at the foundation of many a clerk's failure. Depend upon it, your weekly sales are closely scanned, and your general deportment keenly observed. That you do not receive periodical lectures from your superiors, or that you are not discharged, as you might have expected, is not good evidence that you are not being watched. On the contrary, every move you make is mentally or otherwise recorded.

If you are a half-hearted, go-as-you-please salesman, the chances are that you would have been discharged long ago, but for the fact that your employers know from experience how hard it is to get capable, trustworthy salespeople, and that the best they can hope for is a fair average.

Where are you, Mr. Salesman? Above or below the average?

It matters not so much to your employers to which class you belong, so long as the average remains good, but it is of the utmost importance to yourself. If you are below the average, the responsibility rests solely with you to get on the other side of the dead-line. That there is plenty of room goes without saying; it only remains for you to show your real worth, and the transfer will take place

without your giving notice that you are ready to move up.

There are as many opportunities for advancement in the retail as in the wholesale branch of any business; but if the wholesale salesman conducted himself as thousands of retail salesmen are doing every day all over the land, he would last just about one trip, and that would end his career on the road.

The travelling salesman goes out and digs up business, while his retail brother stays at home to receive it. In either case the chances for advancement are about even.

The average travelling salesman does not miss many towns without making sales of some sort; but hundreds of prospective buyers are turned away from retail stores every day without being properly waited upon, and this results in a serious loss of business to the house where indifferent salesmen are employed.

How many customers visit your counter or department every month and go away without buying anything, is a question for you to decide. One thing is certain to the man who is familiar with both branches of the trade, and that is that many sales are lost at retail in large establishments every day from lack of attention and proper selling ability, such as is absolutely necessary on the part of the travelling salesman.

If every retail salesman could take a trip on the road for a few weeks, he would return to his counter and increase his sales fifty per cent the first month thereafter.

The best way for a retail salesman to decide on how to treat his customers is to pay an occasional visit to other retail houses for purchases, and to take particular notice of the treatment accorded him by the salesmen in each place, and the effect it has upon him. Then he should remember to put himself in the place of the salesman who made the best impression on him, whenever his customers come to buy.

When a prospective buyer approaches you, who has just been treated in a cold-blooded manner by an inefficient, neglectful clerk in a competitor's store, and you greet him with a pleasant smile and obligingly show him everything he wants to see, and especially something that he will be much interested in, you will generally succeed in making a sale, and your new-found customer will go away feeling that he has done well to change his trade from the cold-blooded house.

Now, Mr. Retail Salesman, stop and give this matter some thought. Remember that while behind the counter in your employer's store, you take the place of your employer to every customer with whom you come in contact. Also remember that in other

stores, and perhaps at other counters in the one in which you are employed, there are plenty of salesmen who are cold and "chesty" to their customers, and that if you can manage to be never out of sorts with any customer, you gain a signal advantage over your grouchy neighbors.

Which salesman do you think it will best pay you to copy,— the one who made the best impression on you on your own purchasing tour, or the one who, with a cold look and an impudent sneer, freezes the very buying instinct out of every possible customer that comes within his reach?

Do not think that because your neighboring salesman is discourteous and neglectful of his trade without losing his position, you can afford to be that way whenever you feel like it. Your worst competitor is yourself. The most important battles to fight are from within, and not without.

By always being pleasant to your customers, great and small, by showing your appreciation of their trade, and by interesting yourself in the things you know will interest them, you can soon outdistance your ill-natured neighbor in the race for success. A continuation of the same kind of treatment which puts him out of the race will, also, soon show results in the fight you are making for promotion.

You can be sure of one thing — if you try

your best to be friendly and accommodating to all customers and show them you appreciate them, you will be doing all that any one could possibly do to get and hold their trade, all that was ever done by those who were once struggling as you are for a foothold, but who now enjoy high-salaried positions and a share in the profits in the house where you are employed.

Every successful retail merchant started where you are and won out by being faithful to his trust.

Your very biggest club with which to despatch all doubt as to your advancement is the good-will and confidence of those above you in authority, and the friendly feeling of every one with whom you have dealings of any sort. With this, a thorough knowledge of your particular line of goods, and a careful study of the duties of the man just ahead of you in a more responsible position, you will find you are in mighty good shape to hold your own against all newcomers, and to be a candidate for promotion on the first opportunity that arises. *There is no such thing as good salesmanship without enthusiasm.* I know we have what we call "near-salesmen," but they do not possess that precious quality.

I do not believe you can separate enthusiasm and true salesmanship. In fact, enthusiasm is the life of salesmanship.

The salesman who is enthusiastic in the sense that he pays more attention to the sporting edition of the daily papers than to his customers, who hands out a yard and a half of unbleached cotton and a mile and a half of self-importance for twelve cents, does not know the meaning of enthusiasm.

And I want to say to you men who profess to be salesmen, but who are just plain every-day shams, that I do not intend to lose a single chance to pour hot shot and grape and canister into your ranks. You are the gentlemen I am after.

Now, if the sham salesmen who happen to encounter these lines want to continue to be shams in the open, I say, "Go it, go it, boys"; but if you members of the profession who are only "near-salesmen" posing as the genuine article want to continue so to pose, I will brand you as no-accounts until you either reform or renounce your faith in the profession of salesmanship, and start to look for some other kind of employment.

Somebody has a right to say a few things along these lines, and I propose to have it out with your class before I get through with you, whether you interpose any objections or not. I want to talk to you men who have made your sham pretences in the world of salesmanship and drawn pay for work wretchedly done, keeping a real salesman out of the game that you are trying to play. You have been

at it long enough to be a stumbling-block and a disgrace to the science of the greatest of all professions.

I can stand anything better than I can stand a sham or shirking salesman. I always did have a hatred for near-things, humbugs, and cheats, and of all the humbugs that ever plied a profession, the "near-salesman" is the "humbuggest."

When a man who thinks he is a salesman gets a little swell-headedness, a little "I'm-it-ness," and a little of almost everything, and is made up out of a hundred different sorts of negative things, and attains a little twelve-dollar-a-week position, then he is a first-class humbug in every sense of the word.

With your salesmanship right, with the fountain clear, the stream will be clear. With a good tree the fruit will be good. And I declare to you, "near-salesmen," that the hardest work a man ever tried to do is to be a salesman without salesmanship; to be a good salesman with a shallow nature and a sham heart.

There's no denying the fact that every retail salesman is at times sorely tried with people who look at the world through blue glasses, but the professional salesman knows that sunshiny salesmanship softens the frostiest buyer. It is difficult to keep patient while waiting on a grumpy customer, but it pays in the end to keep your temper, even with the most obstinate and surly.

The salesman who is intent on achieving the greatest selling results literally burrows into the business of selling goods. He must have a nose for sales-making as true and keen as the scent of the bloodhound. That is enthusiasm. It can be developed. Fall in love with your work, and you cannot help becoming enthusiastic.

Enthusiasm is a soul quality springing from knowledge and confidence. The more knowledge you have, the greater becomes your confidence, and your enthusiasm increases in the same proportion.

Look on the bright side of things. Nothing so paralyzes enthusiasm as pessimism.

Next to honesty, enthusiasm is the most essential quality in successful retail salesmanship.

Arguments are of no avail, and tact is worse than wasted, if you do not present your subject with all the enthusiasm you can muster.

The listless answers and hesitating manner of "near-salesmen" cause all shoppers to wonder why these men are not displayed in the show-cases in front of them in place of the goods they represent.

Put the goods on top of the case and crawl inside, Mr. Near Salesman. Almost any article of merchandise in your department is able to plead its own case much more eloquently and effectively than can you, if you will give it half a chance.

Who has not been angered and driven away in

disgust by having goods banged down in front of him and the price hurled in his teeth by a dyspeptic salesman with a makes-little-difference-to-me-whether-you-take-it-or-leave-it expression, who, believing his whole mission is performed, stands glaring at him, waiting for his decision?

In truth, the only thing the customer is trying to decide upon is whether to land on his brainless cranium, report him at the office, or go across the street and get what he wants from Joy, Gladhand & Co. If he is of a peaceful, retiring nature, and does not want to create a scene, he hastily selects something that he would n't have as a gift under other circumstances; but he is determined to have no more dealings with that house. He will keep on trading with Joy, Gladhand & Co.

Then there 's a twin brother to our dyspeptic friend, a few doors down the street. His name is Meander Gadgood. You walk blithely up to his counter, feeling at peace with all the universe, and stand there, first on one foot and then the other,— two, three, five minutes,— waiting for Meander to separate himself from a group of pennant-winning judges in council at the other end of the counter.

Just as you are thinking of going over to Joy, Gladhand & Co.'s, Meander, with a ten-mile look in his eyes, saunters up. Never a word does he speak. With one eye menacingly raking you over from head

to foot, and the other regretfully focussed on the other boys, he stands there, his gray matter — what little there is of it — following his favorite ball team on a distant diamond.

Though there is a reasonable excuse for homicide on your part, you smother your wrath and politely ask to be shown the latest styles in three-dollar fancy shirts. Listlessly reaching into the case, Meander paws over the stock, extracts a couple of patterns, slides them over to you with the air of one administering absent treatment, and stalks back to see how the judges have settled the matter.

About the time you have concluded that you don't need any more shirts anyway, back he comes and hovers like a phantom long enough for you to say, in tones that indicate a gathering storm, that if he is through with his more important business than waiting on his customers you will look at a few more shirts, including some of the good sellers.

Not being an adept at human barometer reading, Meander fumbles around in the stock, finally lugging out one or two more patterns that any man, to say nothing of a shirt salesman, might know were selected with poor taste. Bombarding you with his new-found relics of a past season's success, he retreats again in perfect order to the rear-guard for another confab. Intuitively feeling the angry glances cast in his direction, he determines to renew the attack by

rushing things, and sails back only to be repulsed with a fusillade of indignant protests.

Without a moment's further loss of time, you are well on your way to Joy, Gladhand & Co.'s, where, when you ask to see shirts in any style or price, no effort is spared until the entire line is promptly displayed, if necessary, to please a customer and insure a sale.

Are you that kind of salesman? If you recognize your portrait and it fails to please you, don't blame the photographer. He cannot improve on nature by making a pleasing likeness from an unattractive subject.

Mr. Near Salesman, the time has gone by when representation without courtesy, or life, or enthusiasm can produce profitable sales. You must show the spirit of accommodation and be interesting and convincing in your arguments. You cannot do that successfully unless you are full of your subject, have the utmost faith in your proposition, and are running over with enthusiasm.

A new spirit rules the world of salesmanship in place of the old go-as-you-please *régime*. It is an expression of the mighty force that does things — enthusiasm. If your blood corpuscles are not saturated with it, you are out of date, and you will soon be out of salesmanship if you do not find a way to cultivate it.

Enthusiasm, the first requisite in salesmanship, a sincere interest in the thing to be sold, and a desire to sell it decently,— that is, really, nearly all there is to it; for enthusiasm must perforce lead to a study and a knowledge of the thing to be sold, as well as a study of those to whom we wish to sell it. You cannot cultivate enthusiasm with one eye on the clock and the other on everything else than the customer who is patiently waiting an opportunity to spend some of his money at your counter.

A good salesman must know more about his goods than the man he is selling to knows about them. Knowledge and enthusiasm beat oratory every time. Enthusiasm in a salesman begets enthusiasm in a customer.

You must know your business and you must work, if you wish to hold trade, get new trade, and draw a bigger salary than the common average of salesmen.

The law of nature is yet to be discovered that will prevent a salesman being diplomatic, enthusiastic, honest, and hard-working all the time. Look about you, and you will discover a few like that in the very ranks in which you serve. Keep your eyes on them, they will not remain with you long. You will see them advanced to managing positions or owning their own businesses in a few years.

There is a chance for you if you will about face and take up the line of action in real earnest.

In an interview by a well-known writer on business subjects with one of the leading State Street department stores in Chicago, he was told by the manager that a young man once applied to his house for a position as salesman. He was asked what his qualifications were, and he answered, "My stock in trade consists of knowing the faults of ordinary salespeople through having to put up with them during many years of shopping."

He was given a place, and the first day sold more goods than any other salesman in his department. *He had the knack of putting customers into a good humor by laying himself out to please.* He studied his customer's first inquiry intently, and followed that up instantly and intelligently. At the end of a year he was earning twenty-five dollars per week in that store. A short time afterwards he was offered fifty dollars a week by a gentleman accompanying a cross-grained customer whom he, without losing his temper, had successfully waited upon under exceedingly vexing circumstances.

On leaving to accept the new position, one of his fellow-salesmen asked him how he accounted for his remarkable ability to effect sales.

Promptly came the reply: "The great majority

of salespeople lack tact, enthusiasm, and sympathy with customers."

A great many high-salaried travelling salesmen, and nearly all of the most successful retail merchants in the country, have themselves been behind the counter. There is no better place to get a selling education.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SALESMAN'S RELATION TO CREDITS

Credit builds up business; truth builds up credit.

THE fortune of a business house rests on the wisdom and courage of the credit man.

There are three vital branches — buying, selling, and credits.

The credit department, while last in the logical line-up, is first in real importance in the final analysis of the house's prosperity as a whole. The woods are full of salesmen — bright men who can argue and ably defend the right of the selling-branch to claim paramountcy over the other two; and buyers are ever ready to fall back on the old axiom, "Goods well bought are half sold"; but in reality the credit department is the foundation-stone upon which rests the prosperity of salesmen, buyers, and all.

These three great departments are so closely interlinked that perforce they must go forward, shoulder to shoulder, supporting one another. Like the engine, tender, and cars of a train, they must pull together. The engine hauls the train; the tender carries the coal and water with which to get up steam; and the cars bear the load. Each has its work to perform. The breaking of a

coupling threatens disaster and means a standstill all around.

The object of a train of cars is to get somewhere with something. The something is its freight. A great business house is a commercial train in charge of engineer and conductor.

Somewhere in a book on salesmanship I have seen the salesman described as the engine, steam, coal, and the whole paraphernalia. Not so. The salesman is just the engineer furnishing the force. The buyer is the tender supplying the material. The credit man is the car that carries the load. The track is its trade.

The real object of the entire outfit is the load. In business the load is its credits. Credits properly made mean profits and salaries. The credit man is the conductor of the train. The best thing the salesman can do if he wants to get aboard is to keep near the cars.

Credit men are the commercial conductors, and salesmen are the commercial engineers; there you have it right.

Every salesman should seek to establish a close friendly relationship with the credit man of his house. The man who thinks he can get along well enough by himself makes a great mistake, encountering many pitfalls that could easily have been avoided by advising with his credit man. In the end he must do that

anyway, for no sale is final until it passes the credit department. The salesman who thinks he could get along very nicely if it were not for the "old man" at the desk would get along a great deal better if he took him entirely into his confidence and freely sought his advice concerning his trade.

In turn information to the credit man from the salesman, under ordinary conditions, is peculiarly valuable. The salesman is posted as is no one else, by frequent visits, knows the buyers' strong and weak points, the general condition of trade in the towns and surrounding country, and, if shrewd, can intuitively sense the hazard of an account from actual contact with all conditions surrounding it. If a salesman reports his opinion of each risk assumed by the house on his territory, it does not take long to tell the value of his observations and whether he possesses the capacity of giving a dependable rating.

The credit man, like the salesman, must know more of a man than he knows himself.

The two classes of men resemble each other in the delicacy and the onerousness of the duty they have to perform in reading the signs of the coming stoppage of an account.

No salesman, however efficient in other respects, who saddles his firm with uncollectable or troublesome accounts, can hope to succeed in the long

run. He is a source of loss instead of a medium of profit.

In reality, the salesman is the first judge of credits for his house. No matter what fate may attend his choice of accounts, when they reach the credit man the first selection is entirely in his hands. If he is bent on rolling up sales at any hazard more than to the more important work of carefully picking his way and keeping the credit department posted on the changing complexion of his customers' affairs, he will find himself continually in hot water. He is the first judge of credits in every transaction. The credit man may exercise supervision, may accept or reject his orders, but he depends upon the salesman's judgment more than on any other source of information, and looks to him as the man on the ground.

Exercise your discretion to the best of your ability, and where the slightest doubt exists as to a basis for credit, tell the credit man all about it. Many salesmen, like the ostrich that hides his head in the sand, point only to the bright side, in the blind hope that the other side will not be detected. One thing is certain where this is practised: if the credit man is unable to verify the negative side, accepting the salesman's report, and ships the goods, sooner or later the telltale truth will come out in the ledger. "Be sure your sin will find you out"; there is no escaping that ledger in its work of separating the

sheep from the goats. Then it is that the salesman's weakness is discovered and his measure taken.

The shrewdest and most experienced make mistakes, but picking good accounts means a great many things to be avoided as well as accomplished. A general warning for over-zealous salesmen, and especially for the young salesmen, may be sounded in the statement that poor credits always betray themselves to the close observer in some manner or other, and to avoid unpleasant complications the result of such observations should always accompany the order. Better still, leave the "lame ducks" for the other fellow. There is no sport to the real sportsman in taking a crack at a winged bird simply to bag the game. Go after the good accounts; there are plenty of these on every man's territory.

When an account that has once been good begins to go the other way, do all you can to preserve it by proper nursing, helpful suggestions, and accurate information to the credit department Remember that the very existence of your house rests on the ability of its credit man to know the assets of its customers, the condition of their business, the chances of being willing and able to pay. With his experienced eye and mind he can foresee a coming crash long before the man most interested. He can see the faults of location, of stock, of character of the man. In refusing credit he oftens renders a service

to the prospective customer, but it is seldom appreciated. Now and then a merchant is wise enough to take advantage of the candid opinion of an outsider and curtail rather than increase his liabilities. Usually he is not.

On the other hand, the credit man, by extending credit, often puts heart into a struggling man and makes his success certain. A mark of confidence from one whose judgment is considered good is enough to strengthen a merchant's belief in himself, shaken, perhaps, by unexpected experiences.

When you are tempted to inwardly curse the credit man for "sitting on orders," try to figure out, if you can, that you have no one but yourself to blame for your disappointment. Orders "held up" in the office form two classes — those that are "N. G.," and those that require the most rigid inspection. The latter frequently receive the approval of the credit man and are "passed out" as soon as he is satisfied from all points of the compass that no real risk is involved. The delay in shipment often rests with the salesman for not having furnished a correct statement with the order. Remember, the credit man must make no mistakes. There is no department of the establishment where a blunder may prove so costly. He must not reject a good customer or approve a bad one. He must use tact in ascertaining the truth and in stating it. The future of the

house rests on his wisdom and courage. A credit man can no more make mistakes without discovery than a train despatcher can. He cannot begin over again like a salesman or buyer; he must do perfect work every time. He cannot sink his personality in mechanical performance of duty; his personality is an essential part of his equipment for work.

The science of credits is not an exact one, and not one to which the same rules are applicable at all times and for all lines of business. The endeavor of the credit man is to keep his losses as near the zero point as possible without limiting sales. There are many things he must know, to guide the ship of commerce with which he is intrusted, such as the condition of a territory as regards money when a comparatively small area may be experiencing business depression because of continued bad weather, extension of a new railroad cutting off trade, crop failure, or similar causes, while other territory in the same locality is enjoying phenomenal prosperity; he must be informed as to the cost of production, amount of stock on hand, and in fact all the operative details of his own business, to enable him to judge wisely in putting out goods. He is obliged to have access to many sources of information. *What a great help it is to the credit man to know he can rely absolutely upon the trustworthiness of his salesmen!*

The credit man's position is the most responsible

of all in the establishment. Like a woman's work, it is never done. He is first at his desk in the morning and the last to leave at night. Don't add to his cares by being churlish in fancying you are not getting a square deal when your orders are occasionally delayed, or ruled out altogether. In his every action the best interests of the house receive his first consideration. If it were otherwise, how long could it continue to pay you your salary? Too often is criticism of the credit department indulged in, because of the salesman's desire to increase his sales at any risk.

In judging a basis for credit on short notice, when selling to a customer for the first time, the salesman is obliged to act quickly. His time with his customer is necessarily limited. He sells a bill and is on his way to the next town. The habit of observation, alertness, most of all his powers of perception are the qualities which must determine the worth of a new man. The ledger will find him out in the long run — that is not difficult; the thing is to do so on the spot by common instinct.

It is the place of the credit man, and not of the salesman, to ask direct questions, for the attempt to investigate a customer's affairs by that method is offensive, and nearly always resented. It is a barrier to sales-making. Intuition is the only safeguard with which to take the measure of the trustworthiness of a man on first approach.

It is not easy to sell goods to a hard-headed dealer who discounts all his bills. The man to look out for is the one who places his orders with a lavish hand, indicating his belief that a wholesale retirement of manufacturers and jobbers is imminent. Such a buyer leaves usually without even so much as asking your terms. The wary salesman is always suspicious of the man to whom he can sell without an effort. A reckless buyer invites failure from the start. It is only a question of how long the bank can stand the run before his creditors are notified that a smash-up is inevitable.

The general appearance of a merchant's store or office is a pretty sure indicator of his moral and financial standing. Any evidence of waste, lack of system, or bad management should not be overlooked. A slovenly kept store goes hand in hand with inefficient office management. Haphazard bookkeeping has ruined many a small merchant. It is the common experience of most salesmen frequently to encounter dealers who do not know the cost of things and cannot tell from year to year whether they are making a profit or a loss. Their collections are no better than their payments.

Steer clear of the man who spends money that belongs to his business. The high-liver, however prosperous he may appear, is a menace to credit.

It is a good thing for the salesman to realize

that every time his house extends a line of credit to the financially low-water merchant, it is doing him a far better business turn than his local bank in loaning him a few hundred dollars.

With a cash payment of five hundred dollars a dealer obtains a thousand dollars' worth of goods from his wholesaler, and returns home without funds for his current expenses. With the credit thus obtained he secures from his bank a few hundred dollars, for which he gives his note secured by goods in his store as collateral. The wholesaler takes no note, is not secured in any way. Credit is extended on confidence. That is a thing the salesman should know and impress upon his trade when occasion demands. Confidence is the common law of barter and selling with the wholesaler. Confidence has built up the great credit system that rules the commercial world. Confidence makes it possible for the merchant with small capital to do business and prosper if he is honest and hard-working. Therefore, his obligation with his dealer should be safeguarded as religiously as his obligation with his banker. But too often this is not the case. The note at the bank is promptly met because of a wholesome fear of banking methods. If there is not enough to go around when pay-day arrives, the wholesaler is put off with excuses and a plea for an extension.

Customers are not always grateful for financial

favors. They seem to forget easily, and are often touchy on the subject. After a long up-hill run, during which they are assisted again and again, finally coming out in the clearing, with a little surplus in the bank and the last payment made, they draw a self-satisfied breath and say, "There now, I 've got you paid up. I can do as I please."

It 's a great thing to be free from the bondage of debt, and a greater thing to remember with gratitude the helping hand that made deliverance possible. It is the salesman's duty deftly but firmly to persuade customers like this to appreciate and recognize their obligation.

I remember a customer who had been "carried over" from year to year by the house that gave me my start on the road. The firm went out of its way on many an occasion to help him to make good when no other house in the country would trust him for a dollar. He was always treated right, receiving all the advantages that the best customer on the books enjoyed. His business finally grew to a point where he was obliged to have more goods than his line of credit with us would permit. Realizing that his need was urgent if his creditors' demands were to be met, I volunteered to set him right with a travelling acquaintance from a neighboring house. The other traveller accepted my statement of his condition, and on his first visit sold him quite a

large bill. He kept increasing his purchases with the new house and likewise his payments, neglecting our house on both, naturally feeling that the new house should be paid promptly. As our payments grew smaller, he concluded that he would better place the burden of his business where his remittances were sent. His business continued to grow, and by the time he had wormed himself free from our debt his purchasing power had increased one hundred per cent. Far-away houses began to scent his prosperity, which tickled his vanity. Gradually he slipped farther and farther away from the house that had faithfully stood by him for so many years when he was getting a start.

One day a dispute arose over a price; his purchases had dwindled down to practically nothing; he began to abuse my firm. The ire in my soul was now thoroughly aroused, and I told him in unvarnished terms what I thought of his whole conduct toward us. He got sulky, but was too much ashamed to resent the flaying he received; besides, he knew every word of it was true.

I let him sulk for six months, then called again, greeting him as though nothing had happened. He seemed glad to see me. Cordially extending his hand, he said, "Don't say a word. It's all right. I deserved what I got, and now I'm ready to stick to the old firm." And he kept his word, becoming one of our strongest accounts.

CHAPTER XX

THE SALESMAN'S RELATION TO THE BUYER

"One for all and all for one," is the watchword that causes the interests of buyer and seller to go forward arm in arm, supporting each other, as they should go.

EVERY salesman who has overcome the obstacles that beset his path, and made good, realizes the weight of responsibility that is attached to the daily routine of his work. Heavy as the load appears to be at times, it is as nothing when compared to the thorny road every buyer is obliged to travel in his efforts at selecting only the best sellers the marts of the world afford.

How to pick the winners is as much of a problem to most buyers as the operation of a shell game is to the average public. If the buyer's foresight were as good as his hindsight, all buyers would soon be trying to dodge the proposed tax on swollen fortunes.

It is a great deal easier to criticise than to help. The buyers of your house can get along without your criticism, but they must have your help. Two or three disgruntled salesmen in the line-up can turn enough others against a line of merchandise to swamp the best buyer on earth in less time than it

takes to write it. The salesmen of a house can make or break a buyer at will. Nearly all salesmen live in glass houses when it comes to puncturing the mistakes of the buyer with barbed arrows of criticism. It is discouraging for the salesman to be obliged to have to make good the buyer's mistakes on the road; but the true salesmen, the really big men in the profession, are those who have long since learned that to be free is to have power to overcome all obstacles.

There should be no cause for discouragement because of an occasional error in judgment on the part of the buyers. There are enough good sellers left in the line to insure a substantial increase in your sales, if you will devote some of the time to finding them that is spent in trying to persuade other salesmen that the buyers who do not come up to your standard of fitness should be operating peanut stands.

It's a great thing for the salesman to be optimistic about the goods he has to sell; to take a cheerful view of the buyer's ability. The salesman with a cheerful view will grow and succeed with the poorest sort of backing — that is where personality comes in; a gloomy, discouraged man can never hope to be anything but a trailer. An opportunity to buy United States Government bonds bearing interest at ten per cent, or Bank of England stock at fifty

cents on the dollar, would have no rose-colored hue for him.

Gloom depresses the heart and weakens the salesman's selling-talk.

We learn to do by doing — not by complaining. Make the best of things, and see how clear a path is the road that leads to success.

Lucky is the salesman who can put his little individuality on the side of that big giant Progress, and do his share to pull in the right direction, and help to take away from others the stupidity that clings so desperately to those who believe in the superiority of their own knowledge of how things should be done, as measured against that of those whom they are serving.

To save myself from being misunderstood, I feel called upon every little while to explain that "Men Who Sell Things" is written for negative salesmen, not positive ones

Speaking of positive salesmen, Billy Morris came in to sell my partner hats one day. After a voluble talk — it was a warm day — Billy took off his coat and began all over again. My partner knew that Billy was up against it with a poor line, but he was a great admirer of men who possess contagious enthusiasm, and he gave him the privilege of showing a few samples.

Billy knew that it was not a very good line that

he had, but he singled out one hat and waxed warm with enthusiasm, saying, "I positively want to tell you, Mr. M——, this is, without exception, the best hat in the world."

"Do you mean that, Billy,—the best hat in the world?" asked my partner.

Quicker than a flash he came back with, "Yes, the best hat in the world."

Billy dwelt on the beauties of that hat so much, repeating that it was "the best hat in the world," barring none, that my partner bought a bill of him.

For years after that, through his having made such a strong assertion, we remembered him always as "the man with the best hat in the world," and he got an order pretty nearly every time he came around through his having made a hit with his superlative.

Billy used to be familiarly known to those in the trade who had salesrooms in the vicinity in which he was located in New York, in congested Lower Broadway.

He would approach a customer entering his salesroom, and walk him up to his display, and dilate on the beauties of his hats with great force and positiveness. If he succeeded in making a sale, he would come out rubbing his hands, his face clothed in smiles, and say, "Well, there 's a good merchant." If things went the other way after he had soared to

the highest enthusiasm, and he failed to land his man for a bill, he would come out and tell the boys with a very solemn face, "That buyer can't last. He don't know good values when he sees them."

Billy is still travelling and prosperous. He owns a partnership in the business he helped to build up by his unbounded faith in his line, and has money from his income to speculate in New York real estate.

A poor workman always finds fault with his tools, and a poor salesman always finds fault with his goods. He may have the most salable line to be found anywhere, but that is generally a small part of what he has to sell. His strong line is excuses, travelling to get ahead of some competitor, or cutting the price. Billy Morris sold goods because he believed in what he had to sell. If secretly he had admitted that his goods were poor, he could not publicly have impressed his customers with their merchantable value.

The man who knows, or thinks he knows, that his line is not up to that of his competitor, begins by doing all manner of things not calculated to add to his efficiency, things in keeping with his lack of confidence. He is a negative salesman, imbued with the idea that he must in some manner overcome the fancied weaknesses of the buyers.

For a time his sole object in life seems to be to

try to be ahead of his competitors. Meeting you in the lobby of some hotel, he will ask, "Have you seen Jones yet?" Upon receiving a negative answer, he continues with, "I cleaned up with him all right. I was in X—— ahead of him, and I have been two days ahead of him all the way around."

He seems delighted and satisfied to be two days ahead of the other man, when it could be shown in numerous instances that his bugaboo, Jones, while following behind him, was selling anywhere from two to four times as much goods with a poorer line of merchandise, simply because he was out to sell merchandise, while our weak-kneed friend was out to make towns ahead of his competitors, in the blind hope of covering the supposed errors in judgment of the buyers of his line.

Never quite sure of his goods, we find him again in the role of "starter"— the salesman that is always selling some article below cost for a bill-starter. About three-quarters of his business is done on bill-starters, without profit. He always has the brightest possible prospects on paper, but they never materialize. Cornered by the sales manager for cutting the price, he will begin by excusing his action on the ground that the goods were not right, or that the house around the corner had the same thing at a closer price.

Another idea that he possesses is that one new

account looks better to him than twice the amount sold to his regular customers.

He is always chasing new scenery, and giving Jones plenty of room to take his old trade away because of his instability.

He seems willing enough to open his goods if a customer will look at them; which reminds me of a friend who said that when he was a boy he used to call frequently in company with neighboring boys on a lady who lived close by. She would tantalize the boys by telling what lovely cake she had in the pantry, and she would get each of them a piece if they cared for any. Being well-bred boys, they always refused, until one day they broke her heart by saying in chorus that they would have a piece.

The man who never thinks his goods are right is easily led into arguments with his trade. I once had such a salesman. His prices and styles were never right, and apparently he would rather get into an argument than sell goods.

One day he got into an argument with a customer who was an ardent Romanist, and in place of selling the man merchandise, began to argue that there was no such place as Purgatory. In the midst of the argument, a young Irish priest came in, and the merchant said, "Father Reilly, what do you think of this man, who argues there is no such place as Purgatory?"

Father Reilly answered, "Let him go to Hell, then." The salesman who is continually endeavoring to defend his right of position and parading the errors of the other fellow by arguing is beyond redemption.

Bring yourself to the point where you believe there are no buyers in the business like the buyers in your house, and you will soon forget that your competitors live in the same block.

While no move of the competitor should be overlooked, it is also well not to lose much time keeping an eye on him. He will perceive your eagerness, and will certainly mislead you.

That is natural, but don't lose sight of him; at the same time do not follow or watch all his moves for fear of losing a customer or a sale now and then. If you allow your competition to get on your nerves, the shrewdest of buyers and the most seductive of prices will fail to look attractive to you.

Let the buyers take care of themselves. Your business is not buying, but selling.

Establish an individuality and a good reputation, and live up to them and not upon them, and success is likely to abide with you.

If you are going to get rattled or flustered at some sensational move of a competitor, he will play upon your weak spot, and you will be apt to find yourself spending your energy at random.

Drive the nail home, and get a reputation for doing so, and every one will come to know by the appearance of the work that you did it, because your individuality is stamped upon it. Between taps, of course, you might glance from the corner of your eye at your competitor's strokes; but make up your mind first, last, and all the time that you are not selling your competitor's goods, that the goods of your house are good goods, and that you can sell them.

And you will sell them.

Time and thought taken in complaining of competition is useless expenditure of energy. It lessens your capacity for the accomplishment of things for which you were employed.

The worst competition is that of the inefficient man of poor ability.

If you are a good salesman, you will understand your advantages over such men, and profit by them through a proper relationship to the buyers of the house that puts its signature at the bottom of your monthly salary check.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SALES MANAGER

The backing up a man gets has a large amount indeed to do with his success. Don't let a man fall down. If he comes back discouraged, disheartened, and blue, make him understand he is doing as well as could be expected. Encourage him and stimulate him with newer and better ideas. That is the secret of the sales manager's method in building successful salesmen.

THE saying that a man must work out his own salvation as a salesman is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far. That is only part of the programme.

The best salesmen any house can have are the salesmen it builds for itself. The old saying, "Salesmen are born, and not made," is the veriest kind of tommyrot in this day of science and progress.

Naturally, the root of salesmanship must be in the man himself, but the knowledge of how to develop that root into a plant that blossoms and brings forth fruit is where the work of the Sales Manager comes in.

One good salesman trained and developed in this way is worth a dozen floaters — the here-to-day-and-gone-to-morrow class.

When a salesman gets ready to hear, he is going to be profited by the Sales Manager.

You can take the best seed in the world and scatter it about and leave it alone, but there will be no crop; but when you plough the soil, put in the seed, and harrow it, in due time comes the harvest.

So you can take the best seed from the granaries of salesmanship and scatter it about on the ground of men's intellect, and you need not expect any return from it; but if you take the ploughshare of ripened judgment and prepare the ground and harrow it over with faith, patience, and encouragement, then the seed falls down into good ground and springs up and bears fruit in the salesmen, some fifty, some sixty, and some one hundred fold, to the success of that house.

It is just as necessary that you prepare your mind to hear as it is to prepare your ground for the seed. This is the seed of salesmanship falling upon your mind, and if there is no preparation for the seed there will be no harvest. Get ready to hear.

The poorest Sales Manager on earth talks enough salesmanship to his men every month to make them all top-notchers, when there is a willingness to hear on the part of the salesmen.

The greatest boon to the sales interests of any house is a game Sales Manager, one who is never

afraid of the truth and who knows how to use it in dealing with men; and the greatest drawback is the time-serving Sales Manager, who is afraid of hurting some one's feelings if he does his duty.

Now, it takes two things to make an efficient sales department — a good Sales Manager and a good hearer; and when you get a good Sales Manager and a good hearer together, then you are going to have a first-class sales force.

Well, if a Sales Manager, backed by the very experience that you must encounter in order to become successful, must also think and plan continually in order to get ready to prepare the ground for the seed, what must you do to get ready to hear?

Be not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work.

If you want to be successful in your work, get ready to hear.

How will you get ready to hear?

By thinking and planning and willingness. Just precisely as the Sales Manager gets ready to help you, you ought to get ready to hear.

The standards of two salesmen may differ. Not because one is more capable than the other, but because one has a willingness and a desire to do big things, and the other has not. The man of large conceptions once worked in narrow channels, but when he saw a wider view of what his work might

be he embraced the opportunity to become a bigger man. It is just about as easy to think of a twenty-story building as it is of a one-story building, when you turn your mind to contemplating it.

Make it your business to know what is the best that might be in salesmanship for you, and stretch your mind to conceive it, and then devise some way to attain it. Keep in close touch with the head of your sales department, but let him advise you. A willingness on your part to seek and make every possible use of his counsel and experience will aid you materially in your purpose.

An evil habit may be fostered in a sales organization as in an individual,— the habit of indifference, of shirking, of mischief-making, the clique habit, and a thousand ills of a negative kind, not the least of which is the habit of finding fault with superiors.

Sometimes the trouble may have started with one wrong-headed man or one restless malcontent, and have spread and fastened upon the business until the evil is perpetuated and infects every newcomer.

The Sales Manager must not only watch for the development of any wrong tendency and check it in its incipiency, but must labor directly to inculcate right tendencies, high ideals, cheerfulness, and loyalty.

The Sales Manager

Every outward expression of a business is a reflection of something within, and any sales force must get right with itself before it can hope to be right and work in harmony with the other branches of the business and with the outside world.

Business houses employing many salesmen may well tremble to think of the good or bad impressions being continually multiplied and sent out from their sales departments. Proprietors may be totally unacquainted with that intangible but poten thing, the spirit of their sales force. They are not likely to see it as it impresses outsiders; or they may realize that it is wrong, and feel helpless to change it.

The necessity for a specific organization of sales departments in large institutions, giving the sole direction to a managing head, is responsible for the creation of the position of Sales Manager.

Primarily, the position of the Sales Manager is to stimulate enthusiastic devotion of all to the common cause. That is the thing which spells success. The contagious enthusiasm of a real leader of salesmen culminates when it is communicated to all the members of the sales force. It has then produced an army of doers.

The power to persuade others is, perhaps, the greatest faculty in salesmanship, just as the power to inspire others is the greatest faculty in successful leadership, and is the one thing to which the Sales

Manager devotes his undivided attention in the management of his men.

No man should be at the head of a sales department who does not have this gift of leadership — the ability to inspire loyalty. The habit of loyalty must be established. Those who are not receptive, or incapable of it, must be weeded out.

The salesman who considers no one but himself, who is continually saying, "Where do I come in?" has a negative influence on any sales aggregation, and should be let out. When a salesman cannot be made to realize this, he had better quit and give both himself and his house a square deal. He does an injustice to himself, his managers, and his house when he continues in a position of lacking confidence in the institution and the men at the head of it.

Every salesman has an influence either for good or bad. If he cannot have a good influence he has no right to have a bad one.

CHAPTER XXII

GETTING AN INTEREST IN THE BUSINESS

Never look behind when running a race, unless you want to lose it. Keep your eye on the finish; you can make your exertions count for more.

KEEP your eye on the finish.

Every man who sells things should be working for a purpose.

What is the desire of your heart and soul as a salesman? What is it that binds you down to years of tireless effort?

It is to succeed in the end. Am I not right?

You hope ultimately to secure an interest in the business. Your dominant aspiration is to have a partnership in the business which you have helped to build. Is it not so?

The only way that that hope can ever be realized is by the principles of right salesmanship. There is no room in the stockholders' meeting or at the directors' board for negative salesmen.

By that I do not mean to say that all right salesmen eventually become employers. Good men, aye, first-class men, are to be found in every institution, who, for various reasons, do not seem to bend their energies in the direction of a partnership in the business; but for those who desire in the end to have a

voice in the management through personal investment it can be obtained in no other way than through inherent quality of character in salesmanship.

Profit and prestige lie in positive and highly developed qualities of salesmanship, not in negative ones.

Successful men are men of quality.

Without equivocation I might say that *salesmen lie closer to the hearts of proprietors than any other class of employees.*

When at last you are invited to a place entitling you to share in the profits, what a mighty revelation the whole field of salesmanship becomes! A glance behind the scenes is sufficient to change your views completely. Getting an interest in the business — that is what opens the eyes of a salesman at last to many things that were difficult for him to understand when serving as a private in the ranks.

The head salesman in the house of which I was a senior partner was a man of exceptional ability in many things, but he was generally to be found on the defensive where the policy of the house was a matter of question between the management and the sales force. Finally, opportunity was presented him to take a moneyed interest in the business. His certificates of stock had scarcely been transferred and duly recorded when he wanted to start reform measures on the other salesmen.

Getting an Interest in the Business

There is a certain code of ethics in every establishment governing salesmanship from the viewpoint of the house, and quite a different code from the viewpoint of the salesman.

Having worked my way from stock-boy to salesman, from salesman to buyer, from buyer to sales manager, and from sales manager to employer, I am prepared to say, without qualifying the statement, that the average employer's conception of true salesmanship is the correct form for any salesman to aspire to; and getting an interest in the business will confirm it beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Almost without exception, the histories of great business establishments reveal the truth of the assertion that the executive heads — the proprietors — were once salesmen. You have only to look to the past of the men at the head of the house whose goods you are selling to verify this statement.

Take cases like the Field establishment in Chicago, the greatest business house in the world. Marshall Field was himself a salesman; and that is also true of many of his partners and most of the army of the Field managers.

Find, if you can, one of the great manufactories or mercantile establishments, either wholesale or retail in any line, the world over — concerns that have emblazoned their names and trade-marks around the circuit of the globe — and find one, if you

can, that was not established and promoted to greatness by men who had once upon a time in their business careers sold things. What is true of Marshall Field is true of other merchants and manufacturers, great or small, in every line of trade.

When a salesman has ground out his task for a certain number of days, months, and years, he begins to ask himself where he is going, what he is doing, and — why he is doing it.

Young salesmen begin with enthusiasm, and gradually they settle down into the daily grind, relieved and rewarded now and then, if the results of their efforts justify such acknowledgment.

To the salesman who does not admit to himself that his daily work is a grind, who enters the race and sets his face resolutely toward the finish, never looking back, belong the rich prizes.

The other class, men who have no set purpose in life at all, plod along bravely enough and without any real idea of giving up, and likewise without any real idea of where the journey of business life will lead them. Without the aid of business chart or compass, stopping along the way at times, they ask themselves if the game of salesmanship is worth while, and if they would not have done better to have entered some other field. To each the task that he is doing seems irksome and void of results. That is because his interest is not in his work.

Getting an Interest in the Business

Some one has said that the greatest hell one can suffer on earth is to lose interest in life.

Losing interest in business, looking back from the plough, means, first, decay, then stagnation, and finally retrogression — the beginning of the end.

Worth while or not is n't the question. We cannot run away from our allotted task in life whether we think it is worth while or not. The only men who have tried it successfully are professional hoboes; and salesmen who have endeavored to improve their condition and relieve their minds on the subject by constantly changing about in a vain attempt to locate the star of business success eventually become salesmen hoboes.

The best thing for us all to do is to look at the bright side of things where we are.

There are two ways to contemplate our work. It is neither bright nor black but as the eyes of the onlooker make it so.

Men who sell things are divided into two classes — those who regard their work with rebellious eyes that do not understand, and those who view their work with a mind that rises above conditions and makes the best of them.

When Lincoln freed the negroes from slavery, a great army was necessary. Every man of that army, of course, wanted and hoped to be an officer; every

man would have liked to do the work that Lincoln was doing.

No man should be blamed for having high aspirations, for wanting to be more important; but any man should be despised for refusing to do the humble work of which he is capable, because he has not been made commander-in-chief.

The highest salesman is he who does the lowliest thing well.

We know that, important as Lincoln was, the thousands of brave men who followed his generals in the field of battle were, as a body, infinitely more important. They could have done great things, finding other leaders, perhaps, without Lincoln. Lincoln could have done nothing without them.

The fight that Lincoln and his followers began against the Secessionists a little more than forty years ago is the same fight that the men who sell things must continuously wage against negative qualities in salesmanship, personal weaknesses, competition, and whatever set-backs may be encountered.

In the great panorama of the business world a few names stand out. We see and admire individuals, great business leaders; but the power that controls the entire field of business activity, and has brought business up to where one feature alone, freight by rail, measured in ton-miles, has increased three hundred and fifty per cent in twenty years, ex-

ceeding by far the most optimistic railroad president's dreams — that power is the army of Men Who Sell Things.

In salesmanship it is essential that all grades of men be associated among the beginners. Time only can be depended upon in the necessary weeding process which shall determine the successful among the many. It is the beginner who is the most susceptible to the influence of bad advice.

Let the young salesman who finds himself among the small worries of his environment stop and take stock of himself and his position. If in the beginning he could feel that he was choosing wisely the field of salesmanship, surely he cannot so stultify his first judgment as to weigh it against the influence of another beginner who may have had less experience, and who he knows has far less judgment than himself. Yet this is the one thing which all his nature may prompt him to do.

One of the especial weaknesses of the young salesman lies in expecting too much of his house. He must recover himself and get back his sense of proportion which shall guide him sanely in his expectations. Then, having it, he can do no better than to be guided by this new judgment, keeping his own counsel.

There is no surer measure of a salesman's re-

sources and strength than his ability to move and judge for himself.

If the young salesman will begin this course, merely, he must find it redounding to his every interest in business.

I have little more to say. If I have appeared to be harsh in my treatment of the subject, the apparent harshness has emanated wholly from a desire to paint a faithful and true picture of both the negative and positive phases of our great profession as I have come to know them.

A thorn in the flesh hurts; pulling it out hurts still more; but leaving it in to fester and poison hurts most of all. The pain is severe when the foreign substance is being removed, but that is the only way that health and life can be insured. The thorn out, the wound quickly heals.

The whole problem of negative salesmanship looks to me like the manner in which the farmer killed a neighbor's dog. The farmer was walking down the roadway, whistling a merry tune. A pitchfork was carelessly slung over his shoulder. As he was passing a neighbor's house, a big and vicious dog, with ears back and teeth showing, jumped out and showed fight. The farmer took down his fork and rammed it through the dog, killing him on the spot.

The neighbor, coming from a field close by and seeing his dog dead, exclaimed, "Oh, you

have killed my dog! Why did n't you take the other end of the fork to him?"

The farmer calmly replied: "If your dog had come at me with the other end, I would." And he went on his way.

Hundreds of men who are selling things now will some day doubtless be employing salesmen themselves. You can see it by studying their faces, their actions, the quiet, determined, resolute manner of the one who is sure that one day he will have an interest in the business in which he is now employed, or be in business for himself, and make a success of it.

Business is a great battle-field, and there are, roughly speaking, several million men who sell things, surging backward and forward over its surface, fighting for success. Each has a separate little battle of his own.

One side of the business battle-field is black, while one side is bright. May the readers of this little book try to look always upon the bright side, patient in their hard work, without losing ambition. And may many of them change their present position in the ranks for a higher and more responsible one in the officers' quarters that will give them a chance to do more and better work.

Work is all there is in a man.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE EMPLOYER

Hopes and ambitions encouraged, make the energy of an employee.

To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
—Shakespeare's "Hamlet."

AN employer's worth to himself depends, not so much on what he alone can do, but on how well and how much he can get his employees to do.

In some degree every man is an employer of others. We are all interdependent. The greatest of us needs the least of us.

You to whom this chapter is directed are the employer who gives fixed returns in the way of wages to certain persons for agreed service. You select the persons and direct them in the service performed. You are the head of the house, the guiding genius of its destinies, and the one above all others on whom depends its progress, its achievements, its success.

As the head of a business large enough to make you a direct employer you have wider and more far-reaching responsibilities than you had as a salesman working under the direction of others. Your financial responsibilities have increased, your cares in a

business way are multiplied, your position in the community calls on you for graver things, and your relation to the State has assumed a wider importance. It is not of these things, however, that I am going to write at length — I want to have a little heart-to-heart talk with you about your relation to those persons who are called your employees.

It goes without saying that if you could do all the work yourself you would have no employees; you would not need them. But you have others to assist you because you cannot perform all of the work necessary to your business. You hire others to help you with YOUR WORK.

If you have salesmen and buyers, office men and stock men, and porters and scrubwomen, it is because you cannot do all that they are doing. You have not enough eyes and ears and hands and feet and bodies to do it. You may have a hundred employees, and if you are a good business man it is because you need every one of them.

If there are any in your employ you do not need, you owe it to yourself and the other employees to let them go. The very essence of business demands the lopping off of needless expense of every sort.

An employee on the premises who is not needed is an injustice to every one who is depending on your business for a livelihood. He is not only a sin against the profits, but he is an impediment to all. When

your wagon has four good wheels you do not put on another. On the other hand, you would not send a wagon out with a load if one wheel were missing.

The pay-roll should show no waste of profits.

It is no less important and perhaps more urgent that it should not be a barrier to the incoming of profits.

The pay-roll cannot be too large if it is just to the business.

It should contain the name of every person needed for the proper conduct and development of the business.

If it will enhance the profits of the business to add ten more names on the pay-roll, do not halt with only nine names. Put on the whole ten if your working capital will carry them.

The real, the fundamental, reason why you are in business is to make profit — that is also the reason why you have employees.

Every employee should contribute, directly or indirectly, to the profits of business. If you are a good business man they do.

Therefore every one of your employees, down to the scrubwoman, helps to put profits in your till. Every one of them is your benefactor. They are maintaining your business, they are developing it, they are doing YOUR WORK.

The reason why I repeat that they are doing your work is because, first of all, it is a truth in fact, and founded on the philosophy of eternal justice, and secondly, because you are liable to forget that it is an ever-present truth.

But why am I arguing this with you, you may ask. You are running your business, and conducting it in the light of your own good judgment, and it is a going business, making good profits.

Very well. If that be true, it is morally certain that you do not need to be told this, for the reason that you are already guided by it.

If your business is as successful as that, it is because it is founded on justice, on right and honesty. And justice in business begins at the beginning, and your relations to your employees come first.

A man who is dishonest with his employees is false to himself, and will not be honest with his customers.

Good corn will not grow from rotten seed.

You are reading this perhaps merely to see what further. You may ask, "What are you getting at? I pay my employees promptly the agreed wages for services performed under agreed conditions, what else is there to be taken into consideration?"

This may recall the good old story of the new salesman who struck his first town, which happened to be in Missouri. He approached the hotel register

with the lordly mien of a successful general coming for his triumph. He wrote his name, not forgetting to add the name of the great city from which he had condescended to come, and turned the register around so that the hotel-keeper could feast his eyes on the inscription. The placid expression of the hotel-keeper's face did not change as he deliberately took the pen and entered the number of the room opposite the name, and turned again to the perusal of a newspaper without saying a word.

"You noticed my name?" said the important guest.

"Yes," the host answered without looking up from his paper.

"You see where I am from?"

"Yes," said the same slow voice coming from behind the paper again.

The distinguished young traveller waited a while for some other word or sign from the landlord, but none came. He then busied himself looking after his trunks, with many orders to the tired-looking negro porter, and after a while returned to the conquest of the hotel-keeper.

"You don't seem to be very anxious to have guests here," he said tartly to the patient man behind the newspaper.

"I don't, eh?" he said, looking up, "Didn't I give you a room?"

"Of course you gave me a room, but is that all you do when a guest arrives? Don't you give him any attention?"

"What do you expect, young man, — do you expect me to kiss you?"

Wages are not all the employee is entitled to. He is entitled to respectful consideration, that his manhood be not impinged. He is entitled to sympathetic direction, that he may develop into greater usefulness, just as his labor is for the development of your business. He is entitled to charitable treatment when he commits an error. He is entitled to kindly recognition of labor well performed.

In a word, your employee is entitled to justice. That comprehends the honesty of which I speak, and all things to which he is entitled. And it exacts from the employee the best that is in him for the welfare of your business. It is not a one-sided thing.

You are the superior; you are the beginning of all that pertains to your house — you are the head and source. You select the employees, either directly or through one whom you have to represent you, and in the same way you give them direction in their work. The farmer calls his employee a "hand." That pretty nearly describes him. He is a multiplication or extension of your hand. And like your hand, he does that which your mind wills.

At the beginning of his employment with you he must be told when and where to work, and what to do and How You Want It Done.

You must know what you want done, and convince the employee that you do know.

You must know when a task is well performed, so that the employee may feel that he is working for a competent employer — one who is capable of appreciating good service. Appreciation brings out what good there is in a man.

You are selling your brains and your capital through your employees. Your interest requires, therefore, that you should bring your employees to the highest possible state of efficiency.

Make your employee, no matter what his position, feel that he is a part of the concern — a living, vital human force in its make-up. Above all, make him feel that he is working for an honest employer who appreciates an honest employee.

Work is all you can get out of an employee, but remember that the quality of the work is of first importance.

A pleased employee does better work than a disgruntled one.

Distinguish between the pleased employee and the satisfied employee.

The man who is pleased in his work is diligent

and faithful, and he is TRYING TO PLEASE HIS EMPLOYER.

The satisfied employee is the one who merely wants to earn his wages and let it go at that.

The disgruntled employee is likely to feel like returning the least possible service for his wages. He feels that you have wronged him, and he is only human in secretly resenting it.

The heedless employee is one who feels that he is overlooked; that his services and ability are not appreciated. He is simply drawing wages from you as easily as he can until he finds a place elsewhere.

The stupid employee should never have got into your service. You should have detected him at sight.

Any employee may make a mistake. You do.

All of your employees should be pleased employees. If they are not, it is your fault.

They were at the beginning, or they would n't have come to you or you would n't have accepted them when they came.

If they are not now, ask yourself why, and find out. It is your duty to find out. Then it is your duty to apply the remedy.

You may be astonished to find out how many of them needed only a kind word, a look of appreciation, or a smile.

It takes some effort for a business man to have a smile for all of his employees, perhaps, but it takes an effort to apply any remedy to a fault in your working force. A smile may save you the necessity of giving some employee a raise in wages, and his increased effort as a result of that little kindness may make it easier for you to give him the raise sooner than he really expected it.

Study your employees. You cannot understand them unless you do. If you do not understand them you cannot expect to get the maximum service out of them. You would n't undertake to run an automobile unless you understood it.

Every one of your employees differs from every other one. Each is a separate problem that you should master in so far as your business demands it.

Jones may be disgruntled. He was a good employee. Smith who works alongside of him got a promotion. Jones may know that it was he who deserved it instead of Smith. If he did deserve it and did n't get it, you are at fault, Mr. Employer. You have injured your business in two places — by putting the less competent in the higher place, and thereby getting less value out of the position. The other injury to your business was in doing Jones an injustice, and thereby disgruntling him and lessening his value to your business.

If you were honest with your employees you

would have known that Jones was the one entitled to promotion, and would have given it to him.

Smith would not feel disgruntled, because working alongside of Jones he would know that Jones was the more deserving and entitled to it. He would see the justice of it, and be inspired to deserve in the future.

Brown was heedless. He came to you with high hopes and a heart full of ambition. He worked diligently and carefully. At times he let himself out, and did more than could have been expected of him. He did it out of his natural ambition to progress. When it was done he looked for the sign of appreciation, but it came not. Again and again he sought to win that sign. All he received was a stony stare, cold and hard. It chilled his ardor, and he found himself crying in his heart, "What 's the use?"

If you understood Brown, you would have said, "Well done, Mr. Brown," and you would have shown by your looks that you meant it. And some day Brown might be the man who would step into the gap in the firm and give it the new blood it needed. But you did n't, and what of Brown? It was only a question of time then till he drifted out of your employ and became a floater.

Who took his place? Well, if you did n't take enough interest in Brown to direct and lead him

into usefulness, it was only natural that you hired a floater to take his place. And what will he be? He is a derelict, cast adrift by some other careless employer. Brown has floated into his old place.

You and your competitor have changed employees, and to what end? Each of you has a floater instead of an employee who needed only a kindly touch on the right spot to make him a pleased employee. Once Brown was a pleased employee. That was before he became heedless. But the memory of that time was still in him, needing only to be awakened. Supposing you had called Brown in and said to him:

"I am sorry to see, Mr. Brown, that you are not working up to your old standard. I had hopes of seeing you continue in your ambitions to get ahead. I think there is good metal in you, and I want you to prove to me that there is, and that you can win promotion."

Now, don't you honestly think Brown would have regained his old stride and given you better service than the floater you took in his place — a floater whose ambition was killed before he came to you?

But you let Brown go with a brand on him, because you did n't understand him.

There is a question of morals in this, and good

morals are good business. Think it over and see how far it reaches.

If you lose a good employee you have hurt your business — no matter how you lose him. If it is a hurt, how far does it go? You may not be able to estimate it in the loss of profits, but it is there. You may not know just how much it has impaired the corps spirit of your force, but it has done so. You may never be able to tell in how far it weakened the loyalty of some of the other employees.

Your house is a mill in which business men are made — ever think of that?

An injustice to one employee is an injury to all.

Your employees are your army, and you are its captain. It is told of an army captain who was killed in action, that he was shot in the back while leading his men in a charge. Do you think if he had understood his men he would have failed to draw the hate out of their hearts?

You know the marvellous story of Sheridan at Winchester — how he rallied his routed men and led them back to the same field in victory. Could he have done that unless he understood his men? Understanding them, he gained their confidence that a pursuing enemy could not shake, much less destroy.

An army must have organization, no matter what its purpose — whether it be in the service of

war or peace, in the destroying field of slaughter, or the greater, the useful field of commerce. Organization is effected by selecting and fitting men to the service required — each man to his proper place. To put a man in his proper place, you must understand both — the place and the man.

Discipline follows — in a commercial institution order is a better word. Everything should be in order. Goods, materials, tools, machinery — all should be in that orderly arrangement that saves waste of time and energy. And every man should be in his proper place.

Wasted effort, wasted time, and wasted material are responsible for more failures than the records show.

Habits of good order will teach employees to improve the conditions under which they work, and that means an improvement in their output.

A wise employer will not overload his employees — he wouldn't overload a horse. When he does overload his employees he teaches them to shirk when his back is turned.

Simplify things. The successful employer is not one who impedes his employees with needless form and tedious methods and delays things with red tape. His methods are direct and straight to the point. They cover the essentials, and the non-essentials are thrown in the waste basket.

The Employer

The good employer is a good example to his employees. In him they see honesty, fair dealing, and justice. He is their inspiration, their encouragement, and their hope.

The good employer is careful, exact, and firm. He inculcates in his employees habits of order and respect.

The good employer knows his goods, his materials, his tools, and his premises. He teaches his employees economy and accuracy.

The good employer has that spark of human love in him that yields kindness and sympathy. He wins the good will of his employees, he earns their loyalty, and he kindles in them the fire of ambition.

"He lures to brighter worlds and leads the way."

THE END

Some Press Opinions on "Men Who Sell Things"

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS

"It is refreshing to read a book like Walter D. Moody's 'Men Who Sell Things' for more reasons than one. It reflects the spirit of those men — here called commercial ambassadors — who have done pretty nearly all that has been done to make America great commercially at home and abroad; it brings the whole body of these modern knights of the road into the category of book readers. Here they have a chance to learn something about the principles and — luscious word — psychology of salesmanship, written by a man who has sold things for years, and worked, himself, in every branch of the service until increasing years and experience have brought principles out of practice, and enabled him to point out the rules by which things are done."

PHILADELPHIA RECORD

"This book has no rival to this field."

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"Mr. Moody analyses the technique of his profession with the precision that is born of knowledge. He shows the weak points which the salesman may be expected to develop. He suggests ways to neutralize those weak points. He names the qualities which are indispensable to success in any branch of salesmanship. And he indicates how these qualities may be cultivated, if they do not already exist."

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"Mr. Moody has written the most valuable book yet issued for the practical student of salesmanship, whether that student be a man of many years' experience with the game, or the youngster who has yet to meet his first prospect — which means the whole fraternity; for the able, conscientious salesman is a student to the end of his career."

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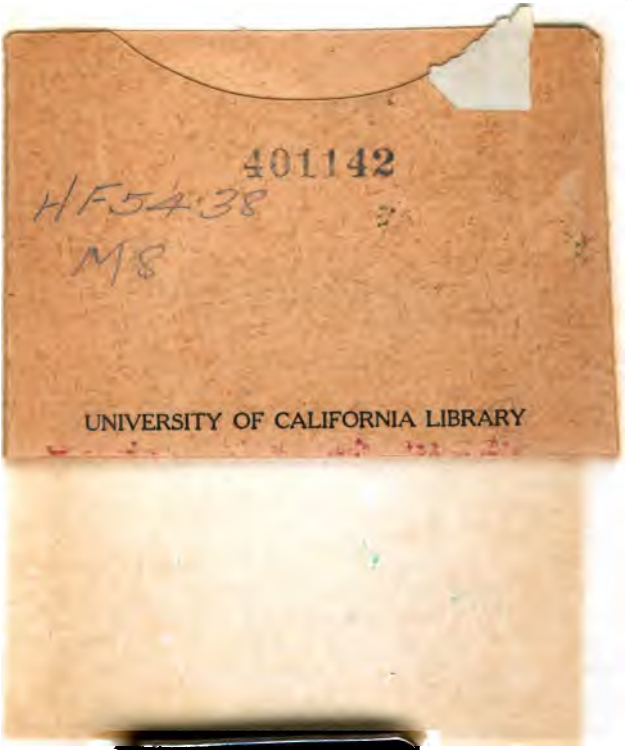
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